the ALTERNATIVE:
AN AMERICAN SPECTATOR

Legends of American Capitalism
by Milton Friedman

How the Intellectuals Flummoxed Britain
by Colin Welch

Of (Ms.)anthropes and Men
by Stephen R. Maloney

The Harold Robbins Award—The Worst Book of 1975

January 1976 • Volume 9, Number 4

The Continuing Crisis

■ November, and in America it is a time of thanksgiving. Across the land pious Americans bowed their heads over recumbent turkeys and thanked the Deity for everything from hair transplants to the November 12th retirement of Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, yet how strange that nowhere was there heard anything but derisory hoots for one of America's most voluptuous blessings, the United Nations!

■ Throughout the postwar era the astonished Yank has been harangued for his beastliness, first by sanctimonious Europeans, then by outraged Third Worlders, and, finally, by his more cosmopolitan countrymen. But in recent years the United Nations has come to the Yank's rescue, by proving irrefragably that the rest of the world abounds with hinds, morons, and scoundrels of such staggering magnitude as to leave America looking like a nation of archangels. If Charlie Manson had been born in any land of the Third World he would by now be a fully plumed and bespangled President-Field Marshal. Richard Speck would be a venerated President of the General Assembly. The United Nations is God's gift to the woebegone Yank. Alleluia!

■ On November 10 the UN General Assembly, by a vote of 72-35 with 32 absentions, approved an American-opposed resolution equating Zionism with racism. No sooner had the smirking faded over this preposterosity than the various exaltés of the Third World, the Communist World, and—curiously—England simultaneously rolled their eyeballs in horror at American representative Daniel Patrick Moynihan's tendered resolution demanding worldwide amnesty for all political prisoners. "A retaliatory move," squalled some diplomats. "An attempt to embarrass the more progressive republics," squealed others. Gauche, sniffed the British representative; and after he, a Mr. Ivor Richard, upbraided Mr. Moynihan for intemperate behavior in a speech comparing Mr. Moynihan to Wyatt Earp, a vengeful Savonarola, and an angry King Lear raging amid the storm, the General Assembly settled back to more serious questions such as self-determination for Puerto Rico and the need to mulct America for more boodle. No, the Yank should not be so humorless. We get more amusement and edification out of the UN than out of both houses of Congress and for a fraction of the price.

■ Apparently Shuffle Diplomacy is to be replaced by Snuffle Diplomacy at the State Department. For months the American Talleyrand's lower lip has shown traces of a prolonged and clandestine pout, but only in November did snuffling become a major ingredient of his political wizardry. On every occasion that he appeared his lower lip was adroop, he spoke mournfully of his mother, and State Department sources leaked reports that he was listening to old Johnny Mathis records. The results of this exciting and audacious démarche were immediate, at least domestically. President Gerald R. (Jerry) Ford fired Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger and CIA Director William Colby, and both he and Mr. Kissinger made heavy weather of it for America's exceedingly popular Ambassador Moynihan. By the end of the month Mr. Kissinger began bawling in public about Soviet obduracy at the SALT talks as State Department officials watched anxiously to see if detente might actually be improved.

■ Meanwhile, Portugal withdrew from Angola on November 17, but so grave were the depredations wrought by that country's five hundred ravening years of colonialism that Russia and Cuba immediately dispatched thousands of technicians and social workers to Angola in an incomparable display of humanitarianism that ought to garner one of them a Nobel Peace Prize, at least once the hostilities cease. Senator George McGovern finally agreed that the war is over in Vietnam, and friends of due process were distraught when on November 26 a California jury found Lynette Alice Fromme, a leading feminist intellectual, guilty of an attempt to assassinate the President. She will appeal, and the constituency of conscience is wondering when Marlon Brando will act.

■ It has been two months since Mrs. Betty Ford's last dithyramb, and Susan Ford remains quiescent; but on November 26 the President's youngest son, David Ford, volunteered a few nincompoop paragraphs to the Ford Family Chrestomathy. After stating disapproval of his father's 1976 candidacy he magnanimously added that "if that's what he wants, he's done enough for me that all of us will go along with it." David is studying "rodeo skills" under the tutelage of Mr. Casey Tibbs, "former world's champion cowboy." Mr. Ronald Reagan announced his candidacy as did Governor George C. Wallace and Mr. Stanley Arnold, the New York business consultant.

■ President Ford will grant government loans to New York City. The announcement was made in a press conference during which the Washington press corps again revealed the high quality of intellect that characterizes its fauna. At least two reporters asked questions redolent of such economic illiteracy that even Mr. Ford was moved to pity. One newsman fell sound asleep during the President's peroration. Later in the month President Ford nominated Judge John Paul Stevens of Chicago to the Supreme Court in a callous act that thrust many feminist yowlers into livid dudgeon. No one knows how the pederasts will take it. And in Oakland, California, a jury awarded $4,300 to Mrs. Eula Wrights, 47, whose buttocks became lodged in a bus emergency exit, "exposing them to public view" and causing her "an emotional upset."

■ Glad tidings from Ann Arbor, Michigan! According to psychology professor Theodore Newcomb, his 45-year study of college students reveals that the average student learns very little while at college and he quickly forgets even that. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Mr. Herbert McGlenchey became the most recent victim of the post-Watergate morality when a judge barred his election for ward leader upon hearing that Mr. McGlenchey just before his election changed the voting place to a moving bus, unbeknownst to his opponent. Otherwise, the November elections revealed no significant departure from usual voting patterns. Voting rights continue to be extended to all Americans regardless of condition; for instance, a dead man was elected to the Philadelphia city council. Congratulations are in order for the relatives of Mr. Francis O'Donnell, the elected representative of one of America's heretofore sorely neglected interest groups. Finally, the Indian Supreme Court has exonerated Prime Minister Indira Gandhi from any form of misconduct, indiscretion, or whatever it was that made it exigent for her to improve upon Indian democracy. The decision caused rejoicing throughout the subcontinent. "We are literally mad with joy," declared Mr. K.H. Patil, a longtime Gandhi associate; and Provincial Prime Minister Y.S. Parmar proved it when he intoned, "The cause of democracy has been fully vindicated. The judgment represents the triumph of democratic forces."

■ An insight into the quality of intellect flourishing in Washington was offered when Senator Jacob Javits appeared on "Face the Nation" to illuminate New York City's economic condition. According to the Senator, poverty there is so widespread "that in New York, about half of the people have less than the median national income"—a merry moment, made all the merrier by the fact that none of the journalists on the panel seemed to realize that a median is by definition the middle point in any distribution of numbers. The good government crowd is still perplexed by that report in the November 30 *New York Times* claiming that despite the layoff of 1,500 sanitation employees since July, New York's streets are now cleaner. And from Hanover, West Germany, comes word that Heinz Isecke, who has been hiccuping continually for the last two years, has finally stopped. Mr. Isecke jumped out of a window on November 27.

■ The lonely vigil of Mrs. Sharon Gould of Old Prairie, Iowa, continues. While hand feeding her two-year-old cow early in the month she suddenly saw her gold nugget wedding band roll southward, over the cow's tongue and toward its tonsils. Since then she has patiently waited at the cow's exitway for the ring to re-emerge. Brandeis University has given its "publisher of the year award" to Mr. Robert Guccione, aesthete. Dr. Albert Schweitzer's jungle hospital is about to close for lack of funds. The hospital was taken over ten months ago by the Gabonese government under the enlightened stewardship of President Albert Bernard Bongo, the celebrated humanitarian. And it was with sadness that the world of high culture received word of the passing of Dr. Ernst Hanfstängl, 88, the Harvard-educated art collector and musician who served as press aide and piano player to Adolf Hitler, the late German reformer. —*RET*

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The Alternative: An American Spectator *was founded in 1924 by George Nathan and Truman Newberry over a cheap domestic beer in McSorley's Old Ale House. Originally published on restroom walls, only since 1967 has it come under purview of the Saturday Evening Club, which publishes it monthly except July and September at 102 West Sixth Street, Bloomington, Indiana.*

One-year subscription (ten issues) cost $8 and all correspondence (manuscripts, subscriptions, threatening letters, federal grants, etc.) should be sent to The Alternative, *P.O. Box 877, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.*

Microfilm editions of The Alternative *are available from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan.*

Published remarkably without regard to race, color, creed, or (most redundantly of all) national origin—and yes, sex, even sex.

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Volume 9, Number 4, January 1976.

The Harold Robbins Award

Theodore H. White has devoted the past fifteen years to developing a new kind of book, a book alluring to the aural tastes of that vast throng of Americans whose ebullient spirits would wither into mere smudges were it not for the constant companionship of hundreds of millions of radios providing soundtracks for their lives and of millions more tvs illuminating their stupefied faces wherever they pause to roost. Radio and television have dealt crippling blasts to the publishing industry, but White has with his quadrennial tomes been striving to overcome these electronic monsters. If *Breach of Faith* continues to be the gorgeous success that it presently is, history will remember White as the man who revolutionized book publishing, degrading old Gutenberg's art to a level about which Marshall McLuhan could only fantasize. These are exciting times in which to live.

Up until now reviewers could write of a book that they could not put down or a book that they would never forget or a book that changed their lives, but now with Mr. White's literary breakthrough they can write about a book that will not shut up. When you purchase it you purchase something more than a bestseller, you purchase a mother-in-law. As you carry it home it begins to stir beneath your arm. Under your reading light it lurches violently, and when you open it you are practically flattened as it roars its first orotund sermon and shrieks its first condemnation. Soon it is gushing forth with its message. It bellows. It vaticinates. It croons. It is the noisiest book ever printed. Close its cover and it still chatters away. Bury it beneath pillows and it will not relent. Drop it in the bath and it hisses, it gurgles, it drones on, invincible and unabashed. This is a book for the modern aural audience. It is written for people who do not like to read. It shouts at you. It is the worst book of the year. White is one of the most garrulous writers ever uncorked on these shores. Next to him Hubert Humphrey could be a model librarian.

Breach of Faith is White's bombastic rendering of Richard Nixon's latest crisis, the Watergate pickle. It covers the period during which Richard Nixon played cat and mouse with reality: the reality that for some 42 years Presidential conduct both visible and arcane has often been unconstitutional, the reality that a President cannot hoodwink a Democratic Congress for long unless he is a Democrat, the reality that bureaucracy has become an informal fourth branch of government possessing veto power over the legislative and executive branches, the reality that about half the nation's press corps is neurotic, and, finally, the reality that Mr. Nixon, despite White's earlier encomiums, is an untutorable second-rater with delusions of grandeur—a Jay Gatsby remodeled. Unfortunately, White never describes the conditions attendant with Watergate and Nixon's resignation quite so sparingly. For him history is soap opera, and one is remiss in narrating it unless he spruces it up with abundant quantities of hellfire.

His story begins with RMN hunkering under his desk, hoping that the American people are unable to comprehend plain English when they hear it on tape. Alexander Haig is pleading with him to rise to the occasion and retire, and Peter Rodino is weeping in the Capitol while Gerald Ford furiously burns his entire wardrobe of double-knit suits. Next, White discusses recent changes in American life, slipping into a tone astonishingly reminiscent of Genesis. It is a chapter of exceeding beauty, though its perceptions are variously incomprehensible, ignorant, and only intelligent when plagiarized from writers like Josiah Lee Auspitz and Paul Weaver.

THE WORST BOOK OF THE YEAR

Breach of Faith:
The Fall of Richard Nixon *

by Theodore H. White
Atheneum $10.95

HONORABLE MENTION

Against Our Will:
Men, Women and Rape

by Susan Lee Brownmiller
Simon & Schuster $10.95

The Fight

by Norman Mailer
Little, Brown $7.95

*For his achievement, Mr. White will receive the entire paperback library of the works of Harold Robbins (used).

Then we get another of those sweeping biographical sketches for which White is so justifiably famous. We see RMN struggling up from the log cabin, passing through the searing experience of California politics, treading water as Vice President behind one of the greatest dog paddlers in American Presidential history, and finally the most searing experience of all: a Presidential campaign against John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and the Democratic voters of several populous cemeteries. In White's hands this political biography takes on the proportions of an American saga. It provides us with all sorts of luscious information about RMN, his associates, his adversaries, and his country, everything except that one transcendent fact that everyone must know to understand RMN, to wit: he had a biological aversion to principle. Next to RMN Stalin was a philosophe. That White never mentions this in all his verbosity about RMN is suggestive. More suggestive still is the following: "His votes on domestic affairs were conservative; but his votes on foreign affairs always, under Truman, were enlightened and supportive." My suspicion is that a White book on American political thought would be even more half-baked than his present work.

By chapter five White has roared and sobbed portentously about the numinous qualities of the Presidency and the enormities about to be perpetrated by RMN. Now White has us gathered up around him in a fever to find out how it all began. Here is how it all began. Tom Charles Huston, a staff assistant to the President, "because he was a favorite of Bob Haldeman, because his ideas had reached the President, he could sit with the masters of American intelligence, commanding millions of dollars and thousands of agents, and dominate all but one of them, J. Edgar Hoover." And for any intelligent reader here is where it all should end. Here is where White's book blows up as a work of history or of journalism, and where it becomes devastatingly obvious that White in his windiness is either unable or uninterested in chronicling events accurately.

What White calls the Huston Plan was a plan calling for the restructuring of the American intelligence community and recommending various activities such as surreptitious entry, mail covers and interceptions, the penetration of reputed subversive groups, and the monitoring of international cable traffic. The recommendations had been made to the President through his young White House aide, Huston. The plan went into effect on July 23, 1970 and was withdrawn on July 28, 1970. That White can seriously suggest that a 29-year-old White House transient "dominated" the chiefs of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency would strain the faith of a Boy Scout. That he also claims that the Huston Plan represented: (1) an ominous turning-point in the Nixon Administration, (2) a direct route to Watergate, and (3) a "Heresy, or truly dangerous thought," is sheer fustian. Possibly White puffs out such stuff to keep his audience awake or away from the tv. It is

(continued on page 36)

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Milton Friedman

Economic Myths and Public Opinion

(*This article has been adapted from a William Arthur Maddox Memorial Lecture at Rockford College, given by Mr. Friedman in December 1974, and printed in Rockford College's* Widening Horizons.)

This morning I'm going to deliver a sermon, and my theme comes from Josh Billings, the famous American humorist of the nineteenth century who said, "the trouble with people ain't ignorance, it's what they know that ain't so." I propose to discuss five myths about American society which are very widely accepted, which have a great deal of influence on public attitudes and public opinions, and yet which in my opinion are wholly false.

The first myth that I want to talk about is what you might call the robber baron myth. In your courses in history—ordinary political history, to a lesser extent even in courses on economic history—you will have learned that the nineteenth century in the United States was an era of rugged, unrestrained individualism in which heartless monopoly capitalists exploited the poor unmercifully, ground the helpless under their heels, and profited at the expense of the rest of the community. The rich got richer and the poor got poorer; Wall Street was set against the working man. You will have learned from the standard history book that the farmers in the Middle West were being ground between the millstone of falling prices for the products they sold and higher prices for the products they purchased. You will have learned that that was the reason for interest in the greenback political movement, the reason for the development of the Populist sentiment in the Middle West and the South, the reason for that magnificent speech by William Jennings Bryan in 1896 when he asked whether mankind shall be crucified on a cross of gold.

That's the myth, and there is hardly any myth, I believe, that is more deeply imbedded in people's attitudes. The myth was spread by the reformers, the muckrakers of the early twentieth century, by the intellectuals who contributed to the drastic change that has occurred in our attitude toward the market on one hand and government on the other, which has in turn produced such a drastic change in the character of our society in the past forty or fifty years.

There is only one element of that myth that is correct. It was an era of rugged unrestrained individualism. It was an era with the closest approximation to pure economic laissez-faire in American history. It was an era in which, except for the Civil War, spending by the federal government never exceeded about 3% of the national income, a sum which is derisory by today's standards when federal government spending is approaching 30% of the national income. It was an era in which there was, for most of it, no ICC, no FCC, no SEC, and you pick out any other three letters of the alphabet and it wasn't there either.

It was a period when about the only interference with what people could do, aside from the taxes that were being imposed to finance a small armed force, courts, legislatures, and the like, consisted of a protective tariff on imports. Laissez-faire economists objected then as they object now to such tariffs, but in any case the level of the tariff was mild compared to the duties that were imposed later on. This situation did not develop, interestingly enough, out of any philosophical belief in laissez-faire. It developed much more simply. In the 1830s, state governments throughout the country proceeded to engage in what we would call socialist enterprises. They built canals, they set up commercial banks and extensive banking systems, they financed railroads, they put up industries. There was no objection to doing this; this was a great era of government enterprise. But in the recession, panic, depression, whatever you want to call it, of 1837, many of these government enterprises went broke. They turned out to be inefficient in the same sense in which all government enterprises have been inefficient from that day to this. By contrast with the situation today, however, they were allowed to go broke and fail. It was this experience that in the nineteenth century really set the United States on the road to laissez-faire.

While the nineteenth century was a period of rugged unrestrained individualism, almost every other feature of the myth is false. Far from being a period in which the poor were being ground under the heels of the rich, exploited unmercifully and the like, there is probably no period in human history in this or any other country in which the ordinary simple man had as large an increase in his standard of living as in the period between the Civil War and the First World War, the period when unrestrained individualism was most rugged. The evidence of this is to be found in the statistics that economists have constructed of what was happening to national income, but it is documented in a much more dramatic way by the numbers of people who came to the United States during that

period. That was a period when we had completely unrestricted immigration, when anybody could come to these shores and the motto on the Statue of Liberty had some real meaning. This was a country of hope and of promise for immigrants and their children, and as many as a million immigrants a year came in 1906-07-08. By 1914 roughly a third of the population of the United States was foreign-born or the immediate descendants of foreign-born.

Did people come to this country to be ground under the heels of merciless capitalists? Did they come to this country to make their own conditions worse? There is no more dramatic way in which people can vote than with their feet. The fact that East Germany had to build a wall to keep people from going from East Germany to West Germany is dramatic evidence in which country the conditions of life were better. In the same way, the fact that year after year hundreds of thousands of people left the countries of Europe to come to this country and to make their home here was dramatic evidence that they were coming here to improve their lot and not to worsen it. Far more effective evidence, I believe, than any statistics on per capita real income which show that real income went up decade after decade at a rate of about 2, 2½, 3% per year. They came here with empty hands. They came here from the most deprived groups in the old world, from Czechoslovakia, from Germany, from Italy. Wherever you name it, it was the poor and the miserable who flocked here and they found here a home and the opportunity to improve their lot. And they found it not despite rugged individualism but because of rugged individualism. It was the rugged individualism that induced the developments in industry, in trade, that offered opportunities for people.

Of course, our condition is far better than theirs. In an absolute sense their level of living was low. But we must compare their level of living not to ours but to the level of living they left in Europe. We stand on their shoulders. We are able to live as well as we do because of their achievements and their accomplishments, because of what happened during that period of the nineteenth century. I must say, it seems to me disgraceful for so many people to denigrate the experience of their parents, when that experience has made it possible for them to live in a free society at their present high level.

So much for economic development. What about the other charges? What about the charge that the agricultural community was being ground down, that it was being exploited by the Wall Street bankers? That we needed to have a greenback movement and a Populist movement and a William Jennings Bryan?

Once again, the evidence against that is very simple and very clear. In the first place, if agriculture was being especially exploited, you would expect the number of people on farms to go down, but the number of people on farms rose by leaps and bounds during the period. If agriculture was in a bad state and being exploited, you would expect the price of farm land to go down, but the price of farm land went up rapidly. Certainly, the prices of farm products did go down. But they went down because the great fertile areas of the Middle West were being opened up and brought into production. Output was growing rapidly, the cost of producing farm crops was going down thanks to great technological innovation in the form of reapers and other agricultural machinery, and the cost of transportation was falling. The result was a great outpouring of production which produced a decline in the prices of farm products at the same time that it produced a very rapid rise in the incomes of farmers and induced many people to enter farming.

On a very different aspect of this experience, was it a period of heartless monopoly capitalism? Quite the contrary, it was the period of the greatest private eleemosynary activity in the history of the United States. The period of unrestrained rugged individualism was a period when the modern type of nonprofit community hospital was first established and developed. It was the period of the Carnegie Libraries and their spread through the philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie. It was the period when so many colleges were founded throughout the country. It was the period of the founding of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and the spread of foreign missions. There was no income tax, no deductibility of contributions, so what people spent on charity came out of their pocket and not, as now, largely out of taxes they would otherwise pay. And yet—or should I say because—in every aspect of private charitable eleemosynary activity, it was a boom period.

So, I believe that the generally accepted historical picture of the nineteenth century is an extraordinary myth. Years ago I wrote a book with a collaborator on the monetary history of the United States, and in the course of writing it I read a great many of the general histories of the nineteenth century. As an economist, I was simply appalled by the level of ignorance of economic matters that was displayed in those history books, by the extent to which the historians were willing to take the cries and the claims of reformers and political agitators for reality. Everybody, of course, always wants to improve his lot. Everybody would like to see the price of the things he sells go up, and the price of things he buys go down. But since what one man sells another man buys, that's hardly a feasible situation. We find the same inconsistency today when people talk about inflation. What people mean by inflation is not the rise in their own wages but the rise in the prices other people are charging them. And that was the case in the nineteenth century. The people who were in the Greenback and the Populist movement were saying, "we want to do still better," but the historians tended to take their exaggerated objections for reality.

That's Myth Number One, a myth which has done enormous harm, in my opinion, by leading people not to recognize the true sources of the strength of this country and the true origins of our greatness.

Never in history has the ordinary man had as large an increase in his standard of living as in America when unrestrained individualism was most rugged.

The Myth of the Great Depression

The second myth is the Great Depression myth, the myth that that decade-long catastrophe—at the worst of which, in 1932 and 1933, 25% of the labor force was unemployed—reflected the failure of private enterprise. Somehow people believe that the Great Depression occurred because private enterprise could not organize society properly, that it was necessary for government to step in in order to save society, that the New Deal and all that followed was a necessary corrective to the mistakes and disasters produced by the deficiencies of private enterprise and unbridled competition.

The only trouble with these beliefs is that they are completely wrong. The elementary truth is that the Great Depression was produced by government mismanagement. It was not produced by the failure of private enterprise, it was produced by the failure of government to perform a function which had been widely assigned to it. Since time immemorial, government has been granted the function, wisely or not, of controlling the monetary system. In our Constitution government is given the power to coin money and determine the value thereof. The reason we had the Great Depression was because government failed in that task. In 1914 we had a supposedly great reform. I say "reform" but I would like to put that in quotes because experience shows that not all reforms are improvements. In this particular case the great "reform" was the establishment of the Federal Reserve System, the establishment of a central banking system. It was

The elementary truth is that the Great Depression was produced, not by the failure of private enterprise, but by government mismanagement.

established supposedly to prevent what were called banking panics.

The immediate occasion was the banking panic of 1907, when the Knickerbocker Trust Company went broke, like the Franklin National Bank, except that unlike the Franklin National Bank, tax money was not used to bail it out. It went broke, the public at large got worried about the stability of banks, there were runs on banks, and this led to what was called the banking panic in which the banks of the country suspended the convertibility of their deposits into currency. Banks continued to operate but you could not walk into a bank, give it a check, and have it give you currency—at that time gold or greenbacks or national bank notes. If you gave someone a check it would be stamped on the back, "payable only through the clearing house." That meant it could be deposited to his account at another bank but it would not be honored for currency unless he were a regular customer at the bank who had been accustomed to getting currency for payroll purposes. That was done in order to prevent banks from failing. After about two or three months, confidence was restored in the banks, the suspension of convertibility was ended and there were almost no bank failures. At the same time, it was a very traumatic episode. In response to the panic of 1907 there was a Congressional investigation, and the Federal Reserve System went into operation in 1914 to prevent any such development in the future.

What was the actual course of events? From 1929 to 1933, far from preventing bank failures and bank collapse, the Federal Reserve System actually produced them. In 1930 on December 11, the Bank of the United States failed. It was the biggest bank that had ever failed in the United States up to that time. Until then the depression had been a more or less garden variety recession. But the failure of the Bank of the United States set off runs on banks. According to its charter and its objective, the Federal Reserve System was supposed to step in and enable banks to meet demands of their customers by buying bonds on the open market or by providing currency through discounting assets of its member banks. It failed to perform this function. On the contrary, it allowed the runs to develop and banks to fail, until finally in March 1933 there was an absolutely unprecedented catastrophe in which all banks of the United States were closed for a week, including the Federal Reserve Banks which had been set up to prevent such an outcome but instead ended up by producing by far the worst and the most disastrous panic in American economic history.

From 1929 to 1933 the quantity of money in the United States fell by one-third. For every one hundred dollars of currency or deposits that people owned in 1929, there were 67 dollars available in 1933. One-third of all the banks in the United States were permitted to fail. This was easily preventable and I can say that not merely from hindsight. There were many people at the time who were urging on the Federal Reserve System a policy which would have prevented this outcome, including people at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York, within the system. All of this is documented in great detail in that book I mentioned earlier, *A Monetary History of the United States*.

The reason for the Great Depression myth is very simple. Private enterprise has no press agent. Government does. Every government agency will inform you that anything bad that happens is the result of forces outside its control. But anything good that happens—who do you suppose produced that? If it weren't so tragic, it would be amusing to read the annual reports of the Federal Reserve System from its inception. Every year which is a year of prosperity and of good times, the Federal Reserve report says, "Thanks to the wise and farsighted policy of the Federal Reserve, the United States had a good year." Every year of recession or depression the Federal Reserve annual report reads, "Despite the best efforts of the Federal Reserve System, events beyond our control..." Even in 1932 and 1933 you have such statements in the Federal Reserve Board's annual report. At any rate, the important point is that far from being evidence of a defect in the private enterprise system, the Great Depression is evidence of the deficiency of governmental arrangements to manage the economy.

The Demand for Services Myth

Let me come to a third myth: the myth of a demand for government services. We all know that from the 1930s onward there has been an enormous expansion in the scope of government. In 1929, just prior to the Great Depression, total government expenditures at all levels, federal, state, and local, were about 10% of the national income. Today, the comparable figure is about 40% of national income, and even that greatly understates government expenditures in a true economic sense, the control over expenditures by government. To give a very simple example: Anybody who buys a new automobile is required to spend something like $500 to $1,000 on items that he would not voluntarily choose, the safety and anti-pollution devices. Let us suppose that instead of government mandating that those be on every car, government had imposed a tax of $1,000 on every new car and had used the proceeds to buy those attachments. We would then include that money as part of government spending and it would raise the 40% figure. From an economic point of view there is no difference between these two procedures. It might be good to have such devices on cars, or it might be bad, but that isn't the question. The question is what is the fraction of the national output whose use and allocation is determined through the political mechanism rather than through the decisions of individuals deciding separately how they want to spend their own money. And the answer is that it's well over 40% if we include these mandated expenditures.

In the process of going from 10% to well over 40%, the myth developed that these expansions in programs occurred in response to an overwhelming public demand, that the government has had to step in because the failure of private markets produced a grass roots demand that government do these things. This is a myth that could not be farther from the truth. Almost every single expansion of governmental activity has had to be sold to the populace at large by misleading advertising that Madison Avenue would blush at. The populace has had to be brought kicking and screaming to approve them. Let me give you the greatest sacred cow of them all, Social Security. In the first place, it has nothing to do with social and it has nothing to do with security. It's an utter misnomer, it's a program whereby you impose a very bad tax in order to provide very inequitable benefits. In the Orwellian language that is used to sell Social Security, what you and I would call taxes are called contributions. Now tell me, is an involuntary payment a contribution? But the tax that you and your employer pay under Social Security is labeled a contribution. If you buy an insurance policy or a retirement annuity or a pension, and you ultimately get your pension, well that's a benefit, you paid for it. But if I get it from other taxpayers, ordinarily I would call it a subsidy. But under Social Security, subsidies to people are called benefits. Much more fundamentally, the program was sold to the American people under essentially false pretenses, on the ground that the ordinary people were so shiftless, so little concerned with their own future that unless they were compelled by government to contribute to a fund and paid a pension afterwards, they would all become charges of the state. The situation of the Great Depression when people became charges of the state because of the state's mismanagement of the money was

presented as if it was typical. It was factually false that, the Great Depression aside, any significant number of people had become charges of the state because they had failed to provide for their own old age. Yet that was the argument that was used to sell Social Security.

Again, maybe Social Security is a good thing. I'm not for the moment talking about that. I happen to think not. I happen to think it's a terrible program, but maybe it's a good thing, maybe I'm wrong on that. I'm here concerned with the myth. Did Social Security reflect a grass roots demand for services? The answer is no. It was sold to the public under false pretenses and has since been expanded under similar false pretenses year after year by people who are in the business of selling government programs to the country.

Let me give a very much simpler and more recent example, which I have already referred to—the safety and anti-pollution provisions for automobiles. Mr. Nader ran a crusade a few years ago that cars were unsafe and that we ought to have an all-wise government agency step in and protect ourselves from ourselves, require us to fasten the seat belts, require us to have safety devices on the car, etc. Again, was there a grass roots demand for government to step in on that area? Not a bit, it was a manufactured crusade which produced laws, the results of which most people don't like. Indeed, the absurd interlock system whereby you can't start your car unless you have first mastered the mechanics of the gremlins that the manufacturers built into your seatbelts, led to such a national outrage that Congress repealed it. I don't believe people realize how extraordinary an episode that is. As a connoisseur of governmental intervention, I have tried to accumulate over the course of years the number of occasions on which a governmental intervention has been eliminated. The list is very short. It includes postal savings, it includes Prohibition. It includes the repeal of the provision for compulsory interlock. You will find it hard to add very many to that list.

Let me give you another simple example. I was in Florida not long ago, just the week after Congress had passed a mass transit bill providing for billions of dollars to be spent in local communities on mass transit. There was a story in the local Florida paper about a proposal to expand bus service, which had been put up to the local voters three years in a row in the form of approval of a bond issue. Three years in a row it had been turned down. Any student of democracy would say that that was pretty clear evidence that it wasn't something which the populace desired. But what happened? The newspaper story was "Now that Washington has passed a mass transit bill we'll be able to have that bus system" because the money will come from Washington. That surely was not a case where there was a grass root demand.

The Free Lunch Myth

This leads me to my next myth—the myth that government can spend money at nobody's expense. What was really involved in that story was that somehow the local people do not pay out the money coming down from Washington, somebody else does. Of course, the truth of the matter is that the money makes a round trip between Florida and Washington and there is a discount taken off for cash as it passes through Washington. I don't know how many of you remember that wonderful description of government by the French economist Frédéric Bastiat who said that government is that fiction whereby everybody believes that he can live at the expense of everybody else.

That is a widespread myth, that somehow or other it is possible to spend money with nobody paying for it. You have everybody yelling and screaming that we ought to have new, bigger, and more generous government programs. Where are we going to raise the money? Tax business. But business corporations can't pay any taxes. A corporate executive may sign the check, but where does he get the money? It's either from his stockholders or from his customers or from his employees. Unlike the federal government, he doesn't have a printing press in his basement. So the only way he can pay money to the government is by imposing a burden on somebody. Government cannot spend money at nobody's expense, which in turn leads me to my final myth.

Unless they help nobody, most government programs benefit the middle and upper middle classes at the expense of both the very poor and the very rich.

Maybe government cannot spend money at nobody's expense, but after all, we all know that government spends money to benefit the poor at the expense of the rich. Once again, however, this is a myth. It is a myth which is promoted because, of course, everybody wants to do things for good purposes. We are all in favor of helping the poor provided you and I are defined as the poor. I am reminded of what happened recently when I was at the summit conference that President Ford called in Washington. I was very amused by the parade of special interests who came up to the platform, and one after another said, "It is absolutely essential that we cut the government budget to beat inflation. I will tell you how to cut the government budget: spend more on me." The elementary fact is that almost all government programs are either a complete waste and help nobody, or they benefit the middle and upper middle classes at the expense of both the very poor and the very rich. That proposition would itself be the subject matter for a longer talk than I have so far given, so I only want to illustrate it with a few examples to show you that it is not entirely a demagogic statement but has some backing. Consider the case I mentioned earlier—Social Security. That's a program that is widely regarded as helping the poor at the expense of the middle and upper income classes. The facts are, first of all, that the tax which finances Social Security is the most regressive tax in our tax system. It's a payroll tax on wages up to a maximum, the reverse of what is regarded as a graduated tax. The benefits are related hardly at all to the amount of taxes anybody has paid and in any event are to a large extent inequitable. A man who has a million dollars income a year from securities will receive his full Social Security benefit after age 65. But if between age 65 and 72 he should work, and gets his income from labor, then not only doesn't he get any benefits if he earns more than a modest amount, but he also has to pay additional taxes on the wages he earns. Much more fundamentally, the young men from poorer families, the people who are going to be poor in our society, go to work and start paying Social Security taxes at the age of 16 or 17. People who are going to be in the upper classes or upper middle classes go to college and graduate school; they don't start paying Social Security taxes until age 24, 25, or 26. On the other side of the picture, it is a well-known demographic fact that richer people live longer than poorer people, and so they will receive Social Security "benefits" for more years. In other words, the poor fellow at the bottom has been suckered into paying taxes for more years in order to provide better-off people with benefits for more years, and that's what's known as a program of helping the poor at the expense of the rich.

I have been making this statement for many years so I am delighted to inform you that a recent study by the Brookings Institution, which can hardly be regarded as biased on my side, has documented the charge in great detail. It has demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt that on the average the effect of Social Security is to redistribute income from lower income groups to middle income groups.

Take any other program you name and you will find a similar distributional effect. There is only one program I know which probably gives more money to people in lower income classes than to the

people who pay taxes, and that's one of the worst programs we have, namely direct welfare. It's a bad program not because it gives money to the poor but because it produces poor people, because it encourages people to be on welfare instead of being on wages. I don't blame them. If you and I are fools enough to make it to their advantage to subsist on welfare rather than work, they would be foolish not to take advantage of it. But nonetheless, I have a great deal more sympathy for that program than for almost any other, because it's about the only one that really contributes to people in lower income classes rather than to the people who pay the taxes.

The great scandal of our times, in my opinion, is government expenditure on higher schooling. There is no program which is so perverse in its distributional effects. In the great state of California which has one of the most extensive public higher education systems in the country, over 50% of the students at the institutions of higher education come from the top 25% of the families by income. Five percent come from the bottom 25%. When I want to be demagogic, I say that's a system under which the people in Watts send the children from Beverly Hills to college.

I could go on and on along this line, but I conclude by urging you to be a little bit more skeptical of some of these myths that are going around, to be skeptical of the myth of the robber baron, the myth of the Great Depression, the myth that there is an underlying demand for government services, the myth that government can spend money at nobody's expense, and the myth that government has benefited the poor at the expense of the rich. We have been moving in a direction in which we have an increasingly limited control over our own lives and that movement has been nourished by a series of arguments which, quite simply, are untrue. □

Aram Bakshian, Jr.

The Philosopher's Disease

I believe it was the late Ben Buncombe, that worldly-wise old British journalist, who once remarked that the only place one is likely to find the Philosopher's Stone is in the gallbladder of a bilious pedant. The same gentleman once put the lie to Plato in a single sentence. "Anyone who has ever had the least glimpse of the malice, pettiness, and cabals roiling in the average university philosophy department should thank God that there never has been, and probably never shall be, such a thing as a nation of philosophers." Ever since, I have had trouble taking *The Republic* quite as seriously as perhaps I should.

Buncombe had an odd but plausible explanation for it all. He called it the Philosopher's Disease. Without going into morbid detail, there were two key symptoms: an insanely tenacious clinging to one-phase answers to multi-phased questions ("a philosophic mania for skeleton keys," Ben called it), and an inherent inability or unwillingness to recognize the concrete consequences that would follow literal application of abstract ideals.

"The poor old sticks are blindered by their own one-dimensional paper truths," Buncombe would chuckle over his brandy, "even when they believe they're the freest of spirits. Take the Libertarians... think about it for a moment; when you boil down all the Libertarian fustian about abolishing moral, ethical, and traditional restraints—all of the socio-religious dogma of the past—what it comes to is the most dogmatic (and self-contradictory) absolute of all: 'Thou shalt have no Commandments.' Why, Ayn Rand and her acolytes might just as well have graven their words on tablets of stone."

I hasten to add that the venerable Ben felt the same disdain for hidebound Conservatives who worship an abstract kind of "freedom of our fathers," hopelessly entangled in a web of ritual hocuspocus and stale rhetoric. His man was Montaigne, a fellow who withdrew from the world only to view it more clearly, and then only *after* an extended participation in war, lust, politics, passion, and the rest of that long gauntlet of experiences that makes life interesting, dangerous, and fathomable. With Montaigne, Buncombe warned that it is "as if our sense of feeling were infected [and] we corrupt by touching things that in themselves are fair and good. We may so seize on virtue, that if we embrace it with an over-greedy and violent desire, it may become vicious..."

I would go a bit further: it will sometimes be twisted beyond recognition or actually crushed to death. Purist conservatives and purist libertarians alike are all too likely to smother their ideals with a lethal ardor. The excesses of Free Thinkers in power—during the Terror in France and the twentieth-century revolution in Mexico, to cite only two examples—were remarkably similar to those of the Inquisition, even, in some cases, down to the torture and burning of victims. There is a bestial side of the human character that rises with equal virulence to the summons of Left or Right, Priest or Philosophe. This potential for cruelty, for intolerance (whether of belief or disbelief) and for violence seems, on the basis of human experience, to lie within every society and every individual. Call it the darker side of human nature, original sin, or anything else you prefer... it has always been there. And, looking around us, it certainly shows no sign of abating today.

The business of organized society—the only reason why man, from the beginning, has always tolerated the imposition of some degree of societal control, has been based on the common sense, consensus recognition of this fundamental problem. Imposed social norms among men, like toilet training among infants, represent a limited infringement on the individual freedom to "do one's own thing" in order to prevent a greater evil or bigger mess from piling up. Dr. Spock, Edith Efron, or anyone else may sensibly argue about the *degree* of imposed control justified in either case—but the need for *some* degree of imposed control is self-evident.

While Dr. Spock has nothing further to contribute to this discussion, Miss Efron does. For an analysis of the weaknesses of the Traditionalist Conservative case, at least at its most extreme, I heartily recommend her "Libertarian Challenge" which appeared in the October 1975 issue of this publication. There remain the weaknesses of Doctrinaire Libertarianism. And, even as Miss Efron kicked the stuffing out of the Tory mentality, she exposed a charming but vulnerable Libertarian Achilles' heel. In admirably stating the case against repressive Conservatism she revealed an almost sentimental Libertarian faith in what she called the "unfettered mind." Take away all religious, traditional, and social "fetters" on our minds, according to Miss Efron's optimistic brand of Libertarianism, and all will be well, or at least better... although she attaches a codicile to this mental Emancipation Proclamation: to wit, legal protection of most accumulated capital gains. Aside from the protection of property, though, she urges us to jettison the works.

Now, if we were all purely cognitive creatures—if we thought out or could be *conditioned* (an unlibertarian concept) to think out our problems without acting on the impulses of anger, greed, jealousy, love, whimsy, or even an arbitrary preference for beefsteak over soymeal, this would all make perfect sense. But we do not; therefore, it does not. The "unfettered mind" is attached to a fettered being and, if not a soul, at least a series of noncognitive drives and feelings. The po-

litical system that ignores this is illogical; the individual mind that ignores it is not unfettered, but unhinged.

Some of the very values that humane (though they might wince at the adjective) Libertarians claim to hold dear are negations of their core belief. Miss Efron, for example, finds hard-line Conservatives odious (perhaps rightly so) in their pliant acceptance of varying amounts of repression, segregation, corporal punishment, censorship, antisedition measures, and other societal curbs, curves, preferences, and bounds. But—and here is the heart of the Libertarian dilemma—unless "humane" Libertarians are only paying lip service to combating these real or supposed evils, they will have to resort to massive doses of statist, antilibertarian intervention to halt them. At the least, this means compulsory indoctrination; beyond that it means force. And, anyone who believes in this is not really a Libertarian.

On the other hand, if the Libertarian concern for these rights, justices, or humane gestures is, indeed, only lip service, then the worst we have heard about them is true; they are actual elitists posing as abstract egalitarians. For when a Libertarian expresses the belief that "The national government should guarantee that all adult citizens, except for criminals and the insane, should have the right to vote," and then adds the qualifier that "people should never be given the right to vote in a manner that would violate any individual's rights," what he or she is really saying is that there *is* a moral absolute, though Libertarians can give no moral or spiritual genesis to justify it... only their own personal preference. And *your* personal preference, unless you can link it to some higher value than *your* opinion versus ***mine***, is not an adequate basis on which to build a peaceful, functioning society. In the absence of a higher moral priority, we are *all* reduced to a world in which the philosophy which governs is the philosophy commanding the bigger battalions, the view which can muster the superior show of real or implicit force. That may be Libertarian; it certainly has nothing to do with individual freedom or consent.

As a crony of Ben Buncombe's, I would be the last to suggest that there is a nonlibertarian, nonconservative panacea—what Ben was so fond of calling a "philosophical skeleton key" to all human ills. Life itself is a perilous journey; organized society, living beyond subsistence with an eye to something more than naked ego gratification, is even more demanding. And yet it is precisely the products of these cumulative individual concessions and individual contributions to a larger whole that make life livable—families, friendships, books, monuments of the past, and visions of the future.

None of these things would exist without some sense of tradition, some sense of oneness with a past and a future that we will never be a physical part of and that hold no Libertarian IOU's drawn against our personal accounts. And yet these are the things that we really cherish.

End of sermon; if you prefer, end of disconnected ramble. Having begun with Buncombe, let me end with de Tocqueville who, describing another sort of ideological wrangle, wrote that, "After a lot of shouting, we both agreed to leave the verdict to the future, that enlightened and just judge who, unfortunately, always arrives too late."

All that I would ask is that, while we await Justice Future's verdict, we do not totally ignore the learned utterances of that veteran if imperfect pleader, Counselor Past.

And so to bed. □

Colin Welch

The English Crisis: I. The Intellectuals

A Prefatory Note from the Editor

Since—roughly speaking—the first quarter of the last century, a powerful sense of cultural inferiority has crept into American realms of influence. This sense of inferiority (combined with shared customs) allowed Europe, specifically England, a powerful influence over American life. The "progressive" ways of the English have been pointed to throughout this century by Americans intent on conducing America along the English path, and so successful have these "progressive" Americans been that today most of our government expenditures go toward the support of institutions very similar to the social democratic institutions of England. Alas, today England's social democratic institutions appear to be terminally ill and before ours fall into a similar condition, we at The Alternative *decided to publish a book on the "Crisis of Social Democracy in England" with especial concern for the lessons that decline holds for England's prodigal son. We shall be publishing this book with Doubleday later this year, and the essays within it will appear in the* New York Times Magazine, Encounter, *and other magazines as well as* The Alternative. *What follows is the first essay in this series.—RET*

The fish, so the French say, decays from the head first. This is what justifies any study of the British left-wing intellectual. By "intellectual" I do not mean an intelligent person, who need not be either left-wing or strictly an intellectual. What I do mean is a person who thinks himself to be moved primarily or solely by his intellect (which may of course be very feeble or very powerful), who regards himself as an intellectual and makes a living thereby or, unable to do so, is influenced by those who do, in the columns of the *New Statesman* and elsewhere. Such people standing as they do in our recent history predominantly on the Left, I expect the epithet "left-wing" to be understood wherever I use the word "intellectual"—and "British" too, for I am not qualified to write of others.

And if I pay a lot of attention to comparatively dull dogs like Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Harold Laski, John Strachey, R.H. Tawney, and Anthony Crosland, this is not because I think them more amusing than their wilder sidekicks but because I am sure they and their innumerable followers have had more influence. Despite the fact that only one of those I have mentioned, Mr. Crosland, is still alive, Britain is still governed by them, perhaps increasingly so. They are still the brains of the ruling Labour Party; they have supplied its dominant prejudices and reflexes as well as the broad mass of its reasoning; even the most rude and earthy, the least doctrinaire, the most pragmatic, greedy, unreflective, and unprincipled, as well as the most woolly and sentimental, of its active members were often drawn into its service by their teachings, directly or at one remove. Some oaf shrieks, "Shoot the bosses!" or "Make the rich squeal!" It appears to come from the natural promptings of an embittered and unlettered heart. Yet dimly behind such outbursts we are aware of the prompting and blessing of some remote grey ideologue, half forgetten yet still potent.

In trying to describe the intellectual I am daunted to find how much of my work was done for me nearly forty years ago by George Orwell, one of the breed himself for all his percipience and humanity, in *The Road to Wigan Pier*.

The typical socialist is not for him a ferocious worker with a raucous voice; no, it is either a youthful snob Bolshevik or, more typically, a prim little white-collar job man, possibly a teetotaller or vegetarian of nonconformist background, and with no intention of forfeiting his social position: both "unsatisfactory or even inhuman types."

Orwell wonders about the motives of

the tract-writing intellectual. Love of the the working class, from which he is so far removed? Hard this for Orwell to believe: more likely a "hypertrophied sense of order." He sees in Shaw, for instance, a dull empty windbag who knows and cares nothing about poverty, who thinks it must be abolished from above, by violence if necessary—perhaps preferably by violence: hence Shaw's worship of "great" men, of dictators Fascist or Communist, of Stalin and Mussolini.

Foaming denouncers of the bourgeoisie; book-trained intellectuals who want to throw what remains of our great but half-wrecked civilization down the sink, preferring a mechanized socialist future of "iron and water"; the more-water-in-your-beer reformers, Shaw the prototype; the astute young literary climbers who are Communists because it is fashionable, "and all that dreary tribe of high-minded women and sandal wearers and bearded fruit-juice drinkers who come flocking towards the smell of progress like bluebottles to a dead cat": all these are the freaks who, in Orwell's view, have brought socialism into disrepute. And, to his bitter regret, socialism is often pictured as a state of affairs in which such "vocal socialists would feel thoroughly at home."

In parenthesis it may be added that Orwell's own idea of "a state of affairs worth fighting for" is hardly more alluring. He found it in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War: the wealthy classes apparently wiped out, the bourgeoisie killed or in flight, almost no "well-dressed" (his quotation marks) people, only rough working class clothes, blue overalls, various military uniforms... Here Orwell himself displays in an aberrant form that guilt-ridden mania for drabness and uniformity so characteristic of those he derides. And indeed, for all the vividness of his caricature of the intellectual, there is much that he could not see from the inside, so to speak. A Prisoner cannot draw his prison without leaving his cell. Let us quote Orwell once more, and then step outside.

"The world, potentially at least," he cries elsewhere in *The Road to Wigan Pier*, "is immensely rich; develop it as it might be developed and we could all live like princes." Orwell here states, with more qualification than usual, a view common to nearly all intellectuals (see especially William Morris, who for Orwell was another dull windbag). Past and future progress are alike taken for granted. Yet past progress was the fruit of a system they despise and seek to end: how then can they be sure of future progress, or even of maintaining ground already conquered? How on earth would we know of these potential riches if capitalism had not thrust them under our noses? And these intellectuals often describe their mental processes as "scientific"! Does not science proceed with more prudence?

The typical intellectual is like the spoilt child of rich parents: he does not at first wonder why his parents and others are rich; this is for him the normal state of affairs. What bothers him, if he is at all curious, is why some should be poor. He does not see poverty and toil as the natural or original state of affairs, in which capitalism found nearly everybody and from which it has rescued many. No, it is poverty that has to be explained.

Our heir surveys the past and present coldly, without humility, wonder, or gratitude. He is not astonished that islands of wealth and culture should slowly and miraculously have risen from the sea of savagery, but vexed that civilization is not universal and evenly spread. In this respect he is what Tawney called an "intellectual villager," without background, terms of reference, or context. His vanity is often unbounded, typified by Shaw's amazing claim that he knew more about banking than any banker, a remark which reveals him to know even less about banking than the rest of us: contrast Goethe's profound humility in declaring that the invention of double-entry bookkeeping was one of the greatest achievements of the human mind.

Our heir becomes aware of and troubled by his own good fortune; he is often

profoundly ignorant of his forebears' struggles, skills, services, and achievements, which are as incomprehensible to him as a watch to a monkey (Tawney's simile, sadly appropriate to his own contemptuous attitude to liberal civilization). Can it be that his forebears stole from the poor what was really theirs, that they enslaved, exploited, and disinherited them, milked them of surplus value? There are hundreds of books from Marx onwards to tell him that this, part rubbish, part oversimplification, is so: and thus in self-righteous hatred, rage, and guilt he turns upon his parents and upon the capitalist system which they represent. (Strangely enough, we discern in this idea, that the rich have robbed the poor of their birthright, a dim and unacknowledged survival of the golden age myth, also discernible in Morris' mediaevalism and elsewhere.)

I have used the word "parents" half metaphorically. Yet surely it is not fanciful to discern some actual dislike, explicit or suppressed, of parents, children, and the family not only in intellectuals like H.G. Wells who, for all too obvious reasons, directed the state to act as parent to all the children engendered by the free love he urged and practiced; not only in the catastrophist socialists, like the Communist poets of the thirties, who urged the overthrow of existing society (including, by definition, of existing families) in the bizarre expectation that something better would emerge; but also in those "moderate," reformist, egalitarian intellectuals like Mr. Crosland who strive, by savage taxation of income during life and of capital at death, as also by inflation, to deprive parents of one of their noblest incentives (another, the purchase of a decent education, Mr. Crosland seeks also to abolish), to deprive the old of dignity, the young of hope, and all families of the power to stay above mediocrity for more than one generation, and to illegitimate and repress a profound and valuable part of human nature, productive of much past progress.

I suspect that that Janus-faced mandarin Keynes in one of his many protean guises has done much to make such depredations respectable. It was he who said that in the long run we are all dead—a remark which would occur to no man with children of his own; he was more consistently egalitarian than he was consistently anything else; and he loudly proclaimed his contempt for the hereditary principle and for the control of wealth by "third-generation men." It is nonetheless odd that an intellectual so cultivated as Keynes should have preferred the first-generation climber to his third-generation successor, who usually has more leisure for thought, learning, art, patronage, and public work. Keynes publicly avowed his preference for the bourgeois "fish" as against the proletarian "mud"; yet how on earth can any bourgeoisie arise if it is thrust back into the mud every time the bell tolls?

This continuous leveling down presents obvious dangers to all forms of hereditary culture, which depends entirely on what Mr. Crosland calls the "accident" (which may not be an accident) of birth. The intellectual justifies it by venomous caricatures of the attitudes and interests of the leisured and better-off classes. The American Thorstein Veblen's caricature is the most amusing, but it appears in forms more absurd and solemn in the jeremiads of his English forerunners, contemporaries, and disciples. The Webbs raved against the functionless rich, their futile occupations, licentious pleasures (including luring boys and girls into "concert rooms" for vice), and insolent manners; such gewgaws as the court, titles, soldiers, and diplomats enraged them; "the very existence in any neighbourhood of a non-producing rich family, even if it is what it calls well-conducted, is by its evil example a blight on the whole district, lowering the standards, corrupting the morality and to that extent countering the work alike of the churches and the schools." These tirades, it should be added, were financed alike by domestic parsimony and by Beatrice Webb's unearned annuity of a thousand pounds a year—a large sum in those days.

Shaw, himself a vast and greedy acquisitor, derided the pleasures of the rich —chocolates, cocktails, silly novels (what

about silly plays?), motors, hotels. John Strachey (first a socialist, then a near-Fascist, then a Stalinoid Marxist, then a Labour Minister, and rich throughout) denounced Macy's, Harrods, and the Galeries Lafayette, and hoped that privation would restore to the bourgeoisie their former power to think. The patrician Tawney sneered at the common vulgarity and ill-manners of business men, though when shop girls were rude he applauded. The moderate and hedonistic Mr. Crosland berates our "illiterate" wealthy classes for their cars and houses, holidays in Cannes, servants, gin(!), and other pleasures to most of which he is no stranger, and even for their failure to stop Georgian buildings being knocked down. Who on earth does he think built them? And who is knocking them down? London University and local authorities are among the worst villians.

The extinction of such a philistine mob of loafers as is described above would be no loss. Envy is said to demand it, and would in Mr. Crosland's view be assuaged by its accomplishment. If the latter were true, the liquidation of the wealthier classes might arguably be desirable even if the poorer classes were, as I think inevitable, impoverished thereby. But we need not argue the point if we think Mr. Crosland and his friends mistaken in grossly overestimating the present prevalence and virulence of envy (a misjudgment which may be explained by the fact that the only poorer people they know are sour Labour activists, notoriously hostile to everything in any way superior to themselves); mistaken in underestimating their own role in fostering and exploiting such envy as exists, thus making themselves incidentally objects of envy; mistaken in overlooking the possibility that, in the relatively equal or "rationally" differentiated society they favor, envy would assume ever more vicious forms and find ever new victims for its malice; and, most important of all, mistaken in ignoring the possibility that the suppression of envy may be essential to the survival of a free capitalist or "mixed" society and that its legitimization (or, by Tawney, virtual canonization) and subsequent triumph will be fatal alike to freedom and prosperity. (For a full treatment of this subject, see Helmut Schoek's brilliant book *Envy*.)

Now if the civilized Mr. Crosland took any such threat seriously, he should be genuinely disturbed: for he has ceaselessly proclaimed his devotion to a mixed economy and a free society. What keeps him cheerful (if he still is, which we may doubt) is an almost unbounded optimism, akin to that felt by the classical economists (though far less securely reasoned) and far removed from the destructive and hysterical nihilism of the catastrophists. It expresses itself in a blind and irrational faith in the ability of capitalism somehow to deliver the goods, no matter how emasculated, overburdened, over-regulated, diminished, deprived alike of stick, carrot, confidence, hope, and rational motivation.

For Mr. Crosland, writing in 1956, full employment is securely achieved, its maintenance easily insured by judicious and timely expansion of domestic demand: i.e., by that "continuing mild inflation" which he and other like moderates consider tolerable or even beneficial. He ignores the likelihood that inflation, in order to perform the beneficent task he allots to it, must be less and less mild, more and more rapid and progressive, always a bit more than is expected: for "expected" inflation is discounted in advance, and produces no effect on demand. Hence in part our present difficulties, with an unprecedented inflation rate and rising unemployment.

The Mr. Crosland of 1956 regards further rapid growth as both essential and certain: no need to bother about it; it can be taken for granted. If it goes on, as it will, material poverty will cease to be a problem. Other problems will indeed remain, fortunately for intellectuals whose lives would be empty without them: not only problems of resentment and envy

caused by residual inequalities but other problems in the fields of psychology, sociology, divorce reform, and so forth. But economics as the dismal science will have served its turn; prosperity is here to stay; investment incentives will remain buoyant, with high savings, high incomes, and high consumption; adequate capital formation is assured, risks of depreciation much reduced. "We stand in Britain," Mr. Crosland excitedly proclaims, "on the threshold of mass abundance." Hey-ho.

"The enjoyment of personal success," Professor Hayek has written, "will be given to large numbers only in a society that, as a whole, progresses fairly rapidly," and in which as a consequence more people are rising than falling—and in which indeed most of those falling are falling only relatively though still rising absolutely. It was to a society which fulfilled these conditions which Mr. Crosland confidently looked forward; and, in such a fortunate society, it is probable that the nit-picking envies and resentments which elsewhere obsess him would fade into insignificance, affording little material for distress or further exploitation.

But alas, things have, at least for the time being, turned out very differently. We in Britain find ourselves in a stationary or declining state of society, the former described by Adam Smith as "hard", and "dull" for rich and poor alike, the latter "miserable" and "melancholy." In such states class hatred and bitterness must thrive, together with those who cause, exacerbate, and exploit our miseries. How has this come to pass?

The most important clue lies in Mr. Crosland's extraordinary views about economic incentive and motivation, views which are fully shared not only by other intellectuals but by successive Labour governments (to which he has been intellectual-in-residence) and their more responsible supporters, and which have clearly guided or justified policy.

"We know too little about incentives," concedes Mr. Crosland at one point, "to make firm statements"—firm statements about whether "equality and rapid growth are hard to reconcile" and about whether "socialist policies must necessarily slow down the rate of growth." Such doubts would induce in other, more modest men, if they valued growth as he does, an extreme caution in enforcing equality, in destroying existing incentives and in pressing ahead with socialist policies. Not so in Mr. Crosland's case.

Everywhere he derides the contribution of financial incentive, competition, profit, and individualism to economic growth; technological and productive advances, in his view, spring rather from "people working on a fixed salary in a large managerial structure"; this fixed salary should, if anything, be lowered, by taxation or other means, for the spread of income in this country, though narrower than in Russia (a country which Mr. Crosland oddly supposes to be egalitarian), is far too wide; the rewards for saving and investment are far too high, and may with safety be reduced.

Mr. Crosland further concedes that "some danger point must evidently exist at which equality begins to react really seriously on the supply of ability (and also of effort, risk-taking, and so on), and hence on economic growth. Where exactly this point lies, no one knows. I do not myself believe we have yet reached it."

We have surely reached it now. For ignorant as they are of where the danger point lies, the practice of Mr. Crosland and his friends has been to press ruthlessly on till even they see unmistakable signs that it has been reached. With irresponsible levity they proceed on their mad experiment, like some ignorant peasant cheerfully piling more and more onto a half-starved donkey, or some crazy doctor in a concentration camp using prisoners to find out how much cold the human body can stand.

Without intending it, they may do grave and irreparable damage, may have already done it, indeed, may have done it before Crosland wrote. For, already some twenty years before he wrote, Evan Durbin, one of the most civilized and percipient of intellectuals, had lamented that taxation was too high to permit the con-

tinued vigorous survival of the free economy. It was for this reason that Durbin had become a reluctant but convinced socialist.

Implicit in Mr. Crosland's remarks about the danger point is some fantastic notion that, once this point is reached, we can in some way retrace our steps to safer ground and all will then be well again.

What then are the signs that the danger point has been reached? With their general contempt for economic motivation, Mr. Crosland and his friends are not likely to be the first to see them. Indeed, like Laski, and like Graham Wallas, who considered, perhaps playfully, that even abnormally strong acquisitive instincts might in the future express themselves in the collection of shells or postage stamps, they tend to rely on other preferred sorts of motivation to keep the show on the road—the self-identification of business leaders with their firms, professional pride, desire for prestige, public esteem, and greed for power. Why these motives should be preferred is not always clear. Greed for power is not usually regarded as an attractive quality, and Dr. Johnson thought no man so innocently employed as in making money. "Prestige" is often only a pretty word for pompous public relations, for hobnobbing with politicians, in Britain for a hunt for titles, and for conspicuous waste in general.

Nor are all the signs of that danger point particularly easy to spot or quantify. How on earth can one measure such impalpables as effort withheld, enterprise thwarted, hopes blasted, skills unacquired or wasted, idleness preferred? The resultant torpor is not even spread uniformly through the economy: incentives totally inadequate at one point may still elicit effort elsewhere. National economic failure is of course measurable in many ways: we are getting expert at it. But Mr. Crosland is still entitled to debate to what extent measurable failure is due to lack of incentive.

Less debatable, more measurable, and perhaps less reversible is the rising tide of skilled and talented emigration which I expect soon to become torrential, an exodus which will leave behind a stagnant and impoverished quagmire bereft alike of wealth and culture. But when this exodus becomes apparent to all, it will be too late to stanch the flow; nor will those who have already gone be drawn back by sudden changes of heart or policy in a socialist party they have grown to mistrust, fear, and hate, which is generally hostile to their interests and which can never permanently be excluded from office.

Mr. Crosland is still doubtless patiently watching the dials: but he does not seem to see what we see—a nation bleeding to death. Nor is this wholly surprising —for in fact one can learn more about human motivations and frustrations, intentions and despair, by talking to ordinary people in a pub than by poring over the official statistics and surveys which are the intellectual's normal source of information.

* * *

Now the present shambles in Britain does not bear much resemblance to the ordered Utopias envisaged by intellectuals like the Webbs, Laski, and Tawney. Instead our country is (relatively) poorer, less free, more equal, and less competitive than it was, and one might suggest that the teachings of such intellectuals have powerfully contributed to these developments, however laudable they may be.

The Webbs and Laski certainly expected vast material wealth to be produced by the elimination of capitalist "waste" and "inefficiency." They might indeed be disappointed by the results of progress so far achieved, but I presume they would still advise us to press on. Tawney cared less about material wealth than vague spiritual assets like fellowship, and would be distressed less by our drabness than by our morose ill-humor and by the class-hatred which declining fortune always exacerbates.

But I think all four would kick up a hullabaloo where I have said "less free." "Less free for whom?" they would cry. Their indignation would be based on the fact that in all four heads, as in those of most intellectuals, is inextricably muddled the difference between *freedom* to do something and the *power* to do it. Without power, freedom to them is a mere useless formality, a hollow mockery, like the beggar's freedom to enter the Ritz. Freedom which is enjoyed only by a minority is not to them a freedom at all, but a privilege to be at best tolerated, more likely obliterated.

An equal society is thus by definition to them a free society, in which no freedoms exist (or *need* exist) which all do not have the power to enjoy, and in which all can enjoy such freedoms as may exist, if any, and thus be "free." A society of slaves might thus be a free society in their eyes: indeed, I am sure that this philosophical confusion—as well as ignorance, gullibility, callous indifference to suffering, and that hypertrophied sense of order to which Orwell referred—helps to explain the scandalous prostration of British intellectuals before the full horrors of the Stalin tyranny in the thirties and forties. Among those who abased themselves were the Webbs, Laski, John Strachey, Stephen Spender, the Red Dean Hewlett Johnson, and many others, all listed in David Caute's book, *The Fellow Travellers*. In some of these cases a harsher term than callous indifference is appropriate: for who does not know, and cannot find in the literature of the thirties if he looks, that positive delight in cruelty and violence from which book-learned ideologues have never been immune?

Beatrice Webb herself wondered why British socialists should be more sympathetic than their continental counterparts to Russian Communism. I suspect the reason may lie not only in greater ignorance, but in the complacency bred by distance and by the reassuring presence of the English Channel and British Navy, at that time still formidable. For the Webbs at least were actually timid petty bourgeois, highly respectful of "established expectations" (including their own annuity) and terrified of revolution, which their own inevitable gradualness seems largely designed to avert. Their conversion to Communism, on the face of it incongruous, took place only when disorder had been ferociously suppressed in the Soviet Union and when the risk of disorder in the West, thanks to the Depression, seemed imminent. What they worshipped was always power and success.

People like the Webbs, unable to tell the difference between freedom and power, are obviously very inadequate defenders of freedom, if not actually hostile to it. They are obviously by definition at best coarsely indifferent, at worst harshly inimical, to minority tastes, cultural interests and moral beliefs, and also to the freedoms which protect these. Would any artistic freedom be safe anyway in the hands of total philistines like the Webbs, who discussed the incidence of sickness during pregnancy during the entractes of *Parsifal*?

In general such intellectuals are also totally unable to see the ways in which we all benefit by freedoms which only some of us can enjoy. We may well lack the means or the brains to write the equivalent of Shaw's plays, say, or the Webbs' vast *oeuvre*: but I do not think Shaw or the Webbs are in a good position to deny that we may have benefited from them! In Tsarist Russia, moreover, the freedom of Tolstoy and Dostoievski to write what they did could not be used by many, and would therefore be regarded by the Webbs as formal and valueless. Yet the use these great writers made of their freedom has enriched the lives of millions who lacked the power and now lack the freedom to express themselves fully.

In the same way, Tawney somewhere blandly describes competition as being of value only to those able to compete. What rubbish this is! I do not myself have to be able to compete in order to profit by the competition of rival playwrights, biscuit makers, ideologues, and doctors for my patronage: indeed, as *tertius gaudens*, I profit more obviously than those who compete and fail and may be ruined by their efforts. →

Another piece of Tawney-nonsense, while we are at it, expresses the moral hatred which he and fellow intellectuals feel for capitalist society. How can people live for service and self-sacrifice, he wails, if society is dominated by ruthless egotism? Why can they not? One may question whether capitalist society is more or less dominated by ruthless egotism than other societies. What cannot so easily be doubted is the freedom it confers on all to live lives of service and self-sacrifice if they so wish. The great classical economists did not say that people *should* be dominated by ruthless egotism. They described men as they are, governed among other motives by an egotism, whether ruthless or enlightened, which may by freedom and wise regulation be turned to public good. If the good life could be lived under Nero, why on earth not under Gladstone?

I described our society today as "less competitive," and here also I think our intellectuals would demur. For one thread running through all their works is that competition, whether desirable or not (it is usually qualified by such epithets as "disorderly," "wasteful," "cut-throat," "unregulated," and so forth), was by the time they wrote dying or dead, being succeeded everywhere by the monopoly which Marx predicted.

Three considerations, to my mind, they entirely overlooked. Baldly stated, without qualifications otherwise desirable, one is that there is not known to me any natural or theoretic tendency towards monopoly in an unregulated capitalist system. Another is that those parts of the British and American economies which are monopolistically controlled have not grown much in the last seventy years—except where, in Britain, the government has intervened vigorously to promote private concentration in the thirties and public corporations as well since 1945. Another is that monopolies should, as Joseph Schumpeter advised, be regarded not only as they are *now*, or at some other particular moment, but *in time*. What looks an unassailable monopoly is in fact (unless protected by statute—a very important exception) a fragile structure, its shaky foundations forever washed and eroded by the currents of potential competition, this ready to become actual the very moment technical advance and new needs make it possible and desirable. For these reasons the wise monopolist is not like the intellectual's caricature of him: he is a timid not an arrogant man, always behaving as though he were not a monopolist at all. He knows when his position, formidable as it looks to the thoughtless, is in fact constantly menaced by the irresistible forces of modern technological "creative destruction" (Schumpeter's phrase for what the Webbs call "waste").

Thus for the Webbs and their friends there arose no question of preserving or extending competition, which was moribund and deservedly so. Their task accordingly was to devise another and quite different industrial system which would do all that competition had ever done, but more and better. This was the purpose of their vast and all-embracing Babel-tower of national and local and municipal boards and public corporations, producing all goods and supplying all services, not for profit but to satisfy measured and objective needs (not "appetites"—for some reason a dirty word for them) and to fulfill a majestic public purpose.

It would be quite unjust to accuse them of seeking to impose upon us a uniform tyranny. They were keen on variety of provision (provided profits were excluded), and the whole structure was to be democratically controlled through numberless channels by the "organized" and "informed" criticism of consumers. Yet somehow we doubt their democratic protestations. We note their rapturous submission to the Soviet Union, which forcibly suggests that their devotion to the machinery was far greater than to the democratic spirit which was supposed to inform it. We note also tones of voice, turns of phrase, manners of speech. Beatrice Webb regarded elections as a device to get the "conscious consent" of the governed. Local government is for Laski merely "educative"—i.e., the citizens are there to be instructed, not to control their so-called servants. Laski quotes with approval Sir Arthur Salter's pompous dictum that "committees are an invaluable instrument for breaking administrative measures onto the back of the public." Laski is everywhere vexed and alarmed by the possibility that socialist plans might be reversed "by some chance hazard of electoral fortune." At one stage he therefore thought it proper to demand of the Tories, as a condition of their return to office, a pledge that they would repeal no socialist measures.

Nowhere here can we find any genuine respect for democracy. Moreover, throughout the outpourings of all these intellectuals runs an obsession with war and the supposed achievements of arbitrary wartime governments, with their direction of labor, capital, and materials—an obsession particularly ludicrous in people so ovine and unwarlike, and an obsession certainly inimical to democracy and freedom. Particularly in Sir William Beveridge, a socialist in all but name, we find reiterated the view that freedom is a peacetime luxury which we can no longer afford even in peacetime, in which as in war the economy must be directed by what he typically describes as an economic general staff. Those who have actually served in any kind of armed forces are normally less respectful of the extreme efficiency of military methods.

Tawney is more of a democrat, but this in a peculiarly hectoring way: he is forever demanding that citizens *must* "participate" in committees and industrial boards and local governments and so forth: it is not merely a right but a duty incumbent on us all to be "concerned, self-educated and active." It is not here a true but a false conception of liberty that is adumbrated, a gross invasion of the right to privacy, which indeed is always one of the goods to be "socialized"—i.e., destroyed.

Why on earth should we "participate" in all these activities, to many of us profoundly tedious? Why should Evelyn Waugh, say, or Stravinsky (or even Tawney himself, did he not wish to) bother himself about municipal buses, bakeries, housing, and sewage? We may not think ourselves qualified to meddle with such matters. We may not wish to obtain the qualifications. We may think we have more important things to do, a concept presumably incomprehensible to Tawney, who defined citizenship for the scholar as "knowledge applied to social improvement." No classical scholar, for instance, could by this definition be a citizen.

Yet indeed with the establishment of all the institutions proposed by people like the Webbs, Laski, and Tawney, it might seem to the rest of us at once impossible *and* desperately important to participate in all of them, to prevent them from being dominated by people like the Webbs, Laski, and Tawney, and by all the hordes of qualified scientific socialist experts favored by them, to whom of course these institutions would be infinitely congenial. There would exist what was described by Orwell, quoted above: "a state of affairs in which such vocal socialists would feel thoroughly at home"—yes, indeed, and they alone. For the rest of us would be excluded, by our own decision if not by that of the vocal socialists themselves.

To the vast extent that our economy has been removed from the private into the public sector, we already suffer from a stagnant tyranny of busybodies and bureaucrats. This again was not the Webbs' ideal: one motive force in particular is missing, and that is the supposedly tremendous power of organized consumer criticism to maintain and increase efficiency and to ensure that new processes are promptly introduced and new needs met. Pitiful organs to this end do exist in the ineffective representation of "consumers" on national boards and in Parliament, which is of course, as the Webbs recognized, totally incapable of controlling the vast and complex functions which it has arrogated to itself. But the Webbs' vast machinery at present lacks the powerful motor and controls they thus devised for it. Would it not go better if these wants were supplied?

How could they be? The Webbs envisage that you and I, or they (it matters not), should collectively as consumers make known what we want and make sure that we get it. At the moment we do this without fuss or palaver, by buying this but not that, by shopping not here but there. Is it seriously suggested that we should turn up in endless tedious committees to argue our preference for New Zealand butter and French burgundy over French butter and Australian burgundy? Perhaps not: more sensible to delegate our choice to some elected manager. But he is only answerable to us as a *mass*: he need not bother about individual or mi-

nority preferences; he is not bound to us by the nexus of profit and loss; if he pleases ten, he can afford to ignore nine with impunity.

But so far we deal only with existing wants and known preferences. When we get on to new processes for satisfying existing wants, the difficulties multiply; how am I to know of such processes? Experts may advise me; but experts are notoriously indifferent to considerations of cost; like the Webbs themselves, they tend to prefer the best *technically* to the best *economically*, and to exaggerate the importance of maximum output irrespective of cost.

And when we get on to new wants, what we don't yet want but shall want when we see it, the difficulties multiply at a compound rate. How can I be concerned or active about what I cannot envisage? How can I expect committees and experts to be concerned and active on my behalf? Why should they be? Their life is easier if novelty is suppressed, and no more profitable if it is not.

Like other intellectuals, the Webbs, Laski, and the rest seem wholly incapable of grasping the role of risk-taking and profit-or-loss-making in the maintenance of economic efficiency and above all in innovation. If they could have grasped it, they would never have proposed to substitute for it, magically simple and infinitely complex as it is, their foothills and mountain ranges of boards and committees, their swarming hives of bureaucrats and busybodies and experts, their snowstorms of paper, their echoing wastes of gassing and boredom, their pandemonium of ceaseless but sterile controversy.

"We find," wrote Tocqueville, "an administration almost as numerous as the population, preponderant, interfering, regulating, restricting, insisting upon foreseeing everything, controlling everything, and understanding the interests of those under its control better than they do themselves; in short, in a constant state of barren activity..."

He was writing of French Canada under the *ancien regime*. He might have been writing either of the Webbs' Utopia or of Britain today. In St. Paul's Cathedral, you may find Sir Christopher Wren's tremendous epitaph—"*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*"—if you seek his monument, look around you. If you seek the Webbs' monument, come to Britain today. □

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The Talkies

by Robert Asahina

Hard Times

"A hero," Robert Warshow once wrote, "is one who *looks like* a hero." Although Warshow was describing the heroes of relatively recent movie Westerns, his definition seems curiously incongruent with our modern sensibilities. Heroism, we now believe, is more a matter of substance than of style; and our heroes and antiheroes—both cinematic and real-life—are likely to be defined morally, not aesthetically. But such a characterization seems inadequate to account for one contemporary cinematic hero—Charles Bronson.

Many who have never seen Bronson's movies (and many who *have* seen them) are inclined to dismiss them—with the same contempt that was once reserved for Clint Eastwood's movies—as models of mindless *macho* escapism. For Bronson is not a *moral* hero in his films, not even in the Hollywood sense of movie morality; and his two-fisted films—to intellectuals, at least—are guilty of the greatest possible moral sin: frivolity. They are "just entertainment"—a condescending verdict supported by irrefutable evidence: their popularity.

But there can be little doubt that Bronson deserves *some* accounting for. In a recent international poll, he was voted the "most popular actor in the world"; and, at a reported $1 million per picture, he is one of the world's best-paid performers. His success was not achieved overnight: It was not until the 1960s, after fifteen or twenty years as a journeyman, that Bronson began to surface as a well-known, if limited, character actor, with roles in such movies as *The Dirty Dozen*; subsequently, after a couple of spaghetti Westerns and a half-dozen minor vehicles, he built up a large following in Europe that was not equaled in the United States until he burst into stardom with *Death Wish*, a little over a year ago.

Bronson's latest movie, *Hard Times*, provides some clues to the nature of his peculiar brand of cinematic heroism. Bronson plays a drifter named Chaney, who arrives by boxcar in New Orleans during the depths of the Depression. Chaney soon meets a fast-talking gambler named Speed (James Coburn) and a hopheaded unlicensed physician named Poe (Strother Martin); and the three join forces in business—the business of illegal, bare-knuckled streetfighting. The pickup matches are staged in alleys, on piers, and in warehouses—with Speed fronting the money and arranging the bets, Poe acting as the trainer, and Chaney dealing out, and absorbing, the punches. The plot spins out its predictable logic—including the brief affair with the proverbial hooker-with-the-heart-of-gold, and the inevitable climactic bout with the stranger in black—and then Chaney leaves as he arrived, by boxcar, in the dead of night.

The plot should sound familiar: If the pickup matches were gunfights, the movie might be any of a hundred Westerns. The resemblance is not accidental, of course; but what separates *Hard Times* from other films of the same genre is the peculiar dignity that Bronson brings to the hackneyed myth of the loner. And it is this curious ennoblement that is the source of Bronson's popular success—and his artistry.

Indeed, Warshow might have had Bronson/Chaney in mind when he formulated his definition of a hero. Of course, Bronson does not "look like" a hero, in the sense of resembling, say, Gregory Peck; but that is not what Warshow had in mind. A moment before Chaney flattens him with a single punch, a young opponent in one of the bouts sneers, "Hey, Pop—you're a little old for this, ain't you?"; and precisely because Bronson *is* a little old for all of this—he is 53—he brings a certain authenticity and gritty credibility to his portrayal of a Depression-era drifter. With his weatherbeaten face and his painfully squinting eyes, he might easily have stepped out of one of Walker Evans' photos.

What Warshow did have in mind in his definition is precisely what Bronson, as Chaney, embodies: the idea of the hero as an *actor*, acting out, as Lionel Trilling characterized it, "his own high sense of himself." This nobility is most apparent

in the fight sequences which occupy the center of interest in *Hard Times*. Although the movie deals with violent men engaged in a violent enterprise, there is surprisingly little *actual* violence shown on the screen. Hundreds of shattering blows delivered by unbreakable fists strike indestructible cheeks and chins—and there is not a cut nor a bruise (nor a broken hand or nose, which would be the real-life result), and only the slightest trickles of blood. A pickup bout becomes an elegantly choreographed *pas de deux*, with the brutality conveyed solely through the sound effects—incredible grunts and groans, and the clap and crunch of fist against flesh. This elaborate stylization forces us to concentrate on the bearing of the fighters, rather than the physical effects of their brutality: There is no cruelty, and no opportunity for vicarious pleasure in the infliction of pain. What Warshow wrote about the violence in Westerns is perfectly to the point here: "Really, it is not violence at all which is the 'point'... but a certain image of a man, a style, which expresses itself most clearly in violence."

And it is Bronson, as Chaney, who is the most "stylish," and thus the most heroic: a heroism—a nobility realized through performance—which is not a moral idea, but an aesthetic ideal. In his acting out of "his own high sense of himself," Chaney's heroism entirely manifests itself—in his fighting, in his relationship with Speed and Poe, and in his quiet arrival and departure by boxcar. He is entirely "external"—for him there is no separation between idea and act, and thus he can be completely straightforward in all his dealings. Although he is a loner, he is not alienated.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Charles Bronson is the only actor who could have played Chaney—or any similar role. That is partly because a "Charles Bronson movie" or a "Charles Bronson role" have almost taken on independent existence of their own—a nearly inevitable consequence of the typecasting of a strong character actor. But there is more to it than just that: Bronson brings more than just a weather-beaten face to the role in *Hard Times*. The kind of heroism which Chaney embodies in the movie is possible only because Bronson, the actor, dignifies the movie with the same kind of straightforwardness that Chaney, the character, is supposed to possess. Actors recently have become increasingly self-conscious, and their characteristic stance toward their roles, especially in genre movies, has increasingly become irony, or parody, or self-parody. Those are typically modern attitudes, of course; perhaps it is the mark of Bronson's genius that he can recapture an aesthetic, rather than moral, ideal of heroism that hearkens back to a pre-modern era.

The essence of comedy, it is said, lies in playing straight. As moderns, we believe that the essence of "seriousness" lies in irony, ambiguity, and self-consciousness. But we just might find that it lies in acting straightforwardly. A lot of people pay a lot of money to see a lot of Charles Bronson's movies; and I suspect that it might be because movies such as *Hard Times* are "like the way movies used to be"—before they were crippled by self-consciousness. □

Robert L. McTiernan

The Emergence of Soviet Sea Power

When the United States Navy celebrated its two hundredth anniversary last October, the optimism characteristic of such occasions was marred by a recognition of discipline problems in the service, of personnel shortages, and, above all, of the growing strength of the Soviet navy. Indeed, the emergence of an impressive Soviet navy over the last decade has recently caused increasing comment, and in some cases alarm. Last May, D.F. Spencer, Jr. warned in the pages of *National Review* that the Russian navy is an "offensive weapon," the creation of which "plainly signals Russia's intention of expanding its dominion over the world." More recently, former Chief of Naval Operations, retired Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, told newspaper reporters that the United States had to back down from a naval confrontation with the Soviets during the 1973 "Yom Kippur" war because the Russian fleet had the United States outnumbered in the Mediterranean 98 warships to 65.

The "Okean 1975" worldwide Soviet naval maneuvers demonstrated conclusively that, whatever their intentions, the Soviets now have an impressive ocean-going fleet. Since the early 1960s, the Soviet Union has added 270 major surface combatants and submarines (including ballistic missile subs) to their fleet, compared with 176 such additions for the United States. This has brought the Soviet navy to a level of 466 combat ships.

Numbers alone, however, are not the best indicators of the progress that the Soviet navy has made. In fact, most observers expect the number of Soviet warships to decline in the next few years. It is the improved quality of individual warships that has increased Russia's total naval capability. The most impressive additions to the Soviet surface fleet in recent years have been its cruisers. The new 10,000-ton Kara-class missile-cruiser is considered one of the finest warships in the world. Two of them have become operational since 1973, and along with six Kresta-II and four Kresta-I cruisers (all completed in the last ten years) they give the Soviets a formidable cruiser force. Since 1971, the Soviets have also added seven Krivak-class destroyers, the most heavily armed ship of its type in any navy.*

An important feature of nearly all of the new surface ships is the SS-N-10 surface-to-surface missile, a horizon-range, anti-ship missile that is difficult to counter. The United States abandoned the Regulus II missile program in 1958, and for years had no comparable weapon. Fortunately, a crash program will soon equip United States ships with a "Harpoon" missile, effective against enemy ships from a distance of fifty to sixty miles. But this is only our first attempt at such a missile, and the Russians have a technological lead in this area.

It is the advent of Soviet "mini-carriers," however, that has caused the most comment and speculation about Soviet intentions. In the late 1960s, two 18,000-ton helicopter cruisers were completed. These highly innovative ships have missile cruiser forwards and helicopter flight-deck afts. The *Kiev*, which will soon be fully operational, is of a more conventional design. It is 40,000 tons and over 900 feet in length. The Soviets are currently building at least one more like it, according to Rear Admiral Bobby Inmann, Director of Naval Intelligence. This ship is a significant advance for the Soviet Union, especially in antisubmarine warfare. Still, the *Kiev* can accommodate only VSTOL (vertical/short takeoff and landing) aircraft. It is not as valuable as U.S. carriers for providing air support and therefore not as effective in "projecting" power into a region.

Aside from upgrading the quality of individual naval units, the most noticeable change in the Soviet navy has been in its deployment patterns. With the development over the past ten years of a modern surface fleet, the Soviets have initiated a new operational policy of "forward-deployment." Rather than concentrating their naval power in coastal waters and around their home ports, the Soviets regularly send their ships into inter-

*These figures are the author's estimates based on recent editions of *Jane's Fighting Ships* and *Jane's Weapons Systems*.

national waters. Since the mid-1960s, the Soviets have established a permanent presence in the Mediterranean Sea, and that area accounts for more Soviet "out-of-area," i.e. beyond home waters, ship-days than any other region. There has also been a permanent presence in the Indian Ocean since 1968. Former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger has said that this out-of-area activity seems to have stabilized *below* the U.S. level. But as the Soviets demonstrated during the "Yom Kippur" war, they still have the capacity to "surge" naval forces into strategic theaters.

The reasons for Soviet interest in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean become clear with a glance at a map. By stationing ships in the Mediterranean, the Soviets have a portion of their ships "on-task," thus saving the transit time from their home ports. It also gives them a direct line to the Middle East, which provides Western Europe with about two-thirds and Japan with three-fourths of their oil needs. This new deployment policy also alleviates the traditionally troublesome geographic problem in Russian naval strategy. By keeping a permanent fleet of about fifty ships in the Mediterranean, the Soviets avoid the risk that their entire Black Sea fleet could be barred from the Mediterranean by a blockade of the Turkish Straits. A similar policy has been followed with the Baltic fleet.

Soviet operations in the Indian Ocean could also prove an important factor in oil politics. While the Soviet presence there has not been as large as in the Mediterranean, it is still large enough to establish Soviet interest in the region, and to influence the foreign policy of littoral states. It also gives the Soviets the potential ability to interfere with shipping lanes from the Persian Gulf around the Cape of Good Hope. The strong friendship between Somalia and the Soviet Union provides the Russians a safe harbor at Berbera in the Gulf of Aden at the mouth of the Red Sea. A reopened Suez Canal could double its importance. With the recent Senate approval of a U.S. naval base on Diego Garcia, however, the United States can now continue its periodic operations in the Indian Ocean without having to rely on a 3,500-mile support-line from Subic Bay in the Philippines.

While the Soviet navy has grown rapidly during the past decade, the U.S. Navy has declined in numbers from a force of nearly 1,000 ships in 1968 to the current level of about 490 warships and subs. (This drastic drop was due to the Navy's decision to retire obsolete World War II warships in order to concentrate all of its resources on new construction.) The United States now has only a slight edge in numbers of major combatants. Admiral James L. Holloway III, the Chief of Naval Operations, estimates that the two navies are roughly comparable in cruiser, frigate, and destroyer capability. (Of course, the naval strength of our NATO allies adds significantly to our own, while the Warsaw Pact countries have virtually no naval forces.)

Nevertheless, in two categories, Soviet and American strengths are not equal. One of the figures that is frequently cited with concern is that the Soviets have a fleet of nearly 270 attack and cruise-missile submarines, compared with 80 U.S. attack subs. Most of the Soviet fleet consists of diesel-powered subs built in the mid-1950s. These would be of use mainly in the unlikely event of an extended war on Western shipping. Nevertheless, the Soviets have the edge here. And even though the U.S. and the USSR have roughly equal numbers of nuclear-powered, nonballistic missile submarines, the Soviets continue to outbuild us in this category.

On the other hand, the United States has a lead in carriers that is virtually insurmountable. The Soviets have completed only one carrier of conventional design. The United States now has a fleet of 13 carriers, including two new 90,000-ton, Nimitz-class nuclear attack carriers. Nearly as important as the size of the fleet are less visible U.S. advantages, such as sophisticated carrier technology

and long experience in training carrier personnel.

Numbers alone, however, tell us much less about the comparative power of the two navies than most commentators would have us believe. What those who feel comfortable merely keeping up with the Soviets in numbers of combatants and those who advocate a return to extremely high pre-1968 levels both forget is that the essential goal in the United States shipbuilding program is to build an adequate number of the right kind of ships to enable our navy to accomplish its strategic mission. That mission is primarily "sea control," guaranteeing that during hostilities we can use the sea for ourselves and deny its use to our enemies. The advent of nuclear weapons has also given our navy partial responsibility for strategic deterrence, the burden for which falls on our ballistic missile submarines, such as Polaris/Poseidon and the proposed Trident. I shall concern myself here, however, with whether the growth of the Soviet navy poses dangers to our own navy's "conventional" mission of sea control.

Oceans can no longer protect us from foreign involvements, but they can be a major obstacle to maintaining supply and communication lines with our closest allies, particularly in the event of war in Europe. The United States Navy must maintain those supply and communications lines and must be able to guarantee the safety of friendly shipping, which transports essential strategic materials. Separated from its allies by water, the United States must also be able to "project" its power, through offensive air strikes and amphibious assault operations against hostile shores.

The Soviet navy's basic mission is sea denial, the direct opposite of the United States Navy's. Its job during hostilities is the defense of the Soviet Union's coastline and the interdiction of United States supply and communications lines. These tasks are in keeping with Russian needs and traditions. For much of Soviet history especially, Russia's rulers have concentrated nearly all of its resources on building a strong army. Geography is in part responsible for confining Russia to the role of a continental power. The use of nearly all of its harbors is impeded by winter ice; and most of its northern waters are available for only a few weeks a year. Because Russia is contiguous with the rest of Europe, it has traditionally been able to pursue its diplomatic and military goals without the use of a large fleet. The same factors govern Soviet strategy today. In the event of war in Europe, the Soviets could send troops and supplies there by land routes. They would need their navy only in order to frustrate U.S. efforts to do the same thing by sea.

Most analysts agree that the USSR is planning its naval program around a "first-salvo" strategy. With the outbreak of large-scale hostilities, a scattered Soviet fleet would attack all U.S. fleets within a ninety-second period. Regardless of who would begin the initial confrontation, the Soviets count on making the initial and final strike at sea. These goals explain the emphasis Soviet strategists have given attack and cruise-missile submarines. The design of Soviet surface warships also supports this assessment. A recent study by the Naval Ship Engineering Center in Hyattsville, Maryland concluded that Soviet warships are smaller, faster, and more heavily armed than their U.S. counterparts. To gain these advantages, however, the Soviets have sacrificed habitability and, above all, endurance. Despite the fact that these ships must be replenished more frequently than U.S. ships, the Soviets have only a small support fleet. In addition, the Soviet vessels have little reload capacity. Even the large missile cruisers must return to port after firing their surface-to-surface missile launchers.

The crucial question is whether the United States Navy could carry out its missions today in the face of an increasingly competent Soviet navy. According to Admiral Holloway, the U.S. Navy could successfully carry out its responsibilities in most situations that can be expected to arise, and especially in the case of a Warsaw Pact-NATO conflict. (On some occasions he has added that it would probably suffer painful losses in the process.) The U.S. carrier force is a key element in maintaining our ability to control sea lanes. Soviet long-range missiles and guns can reach enemy ships within a 300-mile radius. But carrier aircraft can

strike at a distance of over 1,200 miles. Thus, the damage that U.S. attack carriers could inflict on the Soviet offensive fleet with even the slightest warning gives them additional reason to hope that they will be able to land the first and final blow in any conflict. In addition, while U.S. missile defense systems are quite good, the deficiencies in Soviet missile defense systems (in 1973 the Israelis sank 13 Russian-built missile boats without a single loss) indicate that even if Soviet warships could manage to get off a first strike their success is not guaranteed.

Despite this encouraging note, there are other areas where U.S. naval superiority is by no means guaranteed. The most startling example was revealed last summer by Admiral Zumwalt, who claims that during the 1973 "Yom Kippur" war, the Soviet Union issued a "savage ultimatum" to President Nixon. According to the former CNO, the Israelis had trapped and threatened to destroy Egypt's important Third Army, but the United States restrained the Israelis in the face of Soviet threats to intervene to save it. The fact that the Soviet navy had the United States outnumbered by 33 ships, combined with the threat of a Soviet attack on the U.S. Sixth Fleet from four land bases, forced the United States to back down.

It is unclear just how well the Soviets are equipped to engage in such interventions close to the USSR. The Soviets have always been deficient in mobile tactical air support and in the numbers of amphibious warfare troops and landing craft needed for such operations. Still, they are no doubt training army divisions to supplement their force of 15,000 marines, as well as increasing their fleet of amphibious ships. And their behavior during the "Yom Kippur" war is an ominous indication of possibly belligerent intentions.

The political will to face up to a credible Soviet challenge to U.S. seapower will be a necessary element in any successful defense policy in the coming decade. Congress has already demonstrated a stubborn refusal to allow the Soviets to shift the balance of power in a vital area by approving a naval base for the Indian Ocean. Several procurement programs intended to correct imbalances in our naval forces have received consistent support in Congress and are well underway. Next year the first of 26 huge Los Angeles-class nuclear attack subs will be commissioned. This should help close the gap in the area of anti-sub and anti-ship submarines. The first of 30 new Spruance-class multi-mission gas-powered destroyers has already appeared. There are also plans to develop patrol frigates and hydrofoils and continue work on long-range cruise missiles and the sophisticated Aegis system for defense against missiles and aircraft.

Admiral Holloway estimates that a navy of at least 600 ships will be necessary in the 1980s if the U.S. is to maintain its capability for success. Though former CNOs have usually set a goal closer to 800 ships, at present construction rates the United States will probably fall slightly short even of the new, lower figure. Nor is everyone in Congress favorable to Admiral Holloway's request. Some liberals such as Representative Les Aspin have already announced their opposition to the plan.

Ensuring that the United States Navy has the right *type* of ships for sea control is also crucial. Carriers are still the most effective means to this end, since they carry aircraft effective against submarines and anti-ship missiles as well as planes for bombing other ships and land targets. Carriers also have operational flexibility. Building an airbase is an expensive and time-consuming process; and its usefulness lasts only as long as good relations with the government of the country where it is located. This problem can be circumvented through the use of carriers, which can be sent to an area as soon as an emergency arises and withdrawn immediately when it has past, without any wasteful abandonment of equipment. As the Navy's Forrestal-class carriers approach obsolescence, the United States will have to build at least one carrier every two years in order to maintain a force level of 12 carriers in the 1980s.

Determination in Congress alone, however, cannot ensure adequate naval strength. Proponents of a strong Navy must also be realistic. There will be limits to the amount of money available for naval procurement in the coming years. While polls indicate support for a strong national defense, Americans are unlikely to favor any large increases in defense spending. And with the economy in trouble, pressure in Congress for further defense cuts is likely to increase. But even given an adequate overall defense budget, the higher salaries required for a volunteer military, crucial needs in other defense areas, and the high rate of inflation within the shipbuilding industry will necessarily restrict the growth of the U.S. fleet—unless the Navy makes very efficient use of its defense dollars.

Rumor has it that a sign in Soviet Admiral Gorshkov's office reads: "Better is the enemy of good enough." More of the same attitude would benefit U.S. defense posture. The U.S. Navy and its supporters have an understandable preference for large, lavishly-equipped ships. But such projects, besides interfering with higher force levels, make ideal targets for those who think we're already spending too much on the Navy.

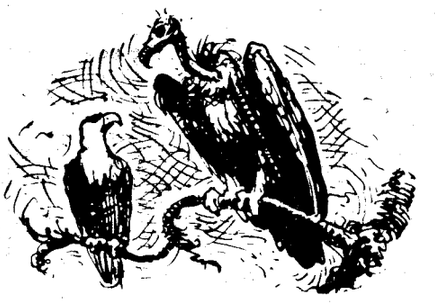
An illustration is the huge nuclear strike cruiser, which was cut recently from this year's budget. The idea for the cruiser, which may be revived next year, originated not in the Navy, but with Admiral Hyman Rickover and Representative Charles E. Bennett, Chairman of the House Sea Power Subcommittee. The ship is impressively versatile and can be used to protect a carrier task force or to carry out offensive missions on its own. It is also very expensive, the first cruiser costing $1.2 billion and those that follow about $850 million each.

The Defense Department's program to maintain the size of the U.S. attack carrier fleet shows a better way to balance capability and economy. Instead of building a fourth 90,000-ton, Nimitz-class nuclear carrier, which would probably cost about $2 billion, the current Administration is determined to move to the smaller, 50-60,000-ton carrier. Though these nuclear-powered "mediums" will still be larger than any Soviet carrier, critics of this move, such as Admiral Rickover, claim that the higher cost of the big carriers is justified since they can carry and support larger planes and more of them. Nevertheless, as former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger frequently reminded the Navy, the new carrier, which has been designated the CVNX, will result in significant savings to their shipbuilding programs.

Most naval analysts agree that the United States must increase the size of its fleet in order to guarantee the Navy's ability to perform its mission. That mission of sea control requires not only a large number of combat ships, but the maintenance of an extensive support fleet. One of the barriers to the construction of a larger Navy is Title VIII of Public Law 93-365, which requires that all new naval combat forces be nuclear-powered. Nearly everyone concedes that nuclear propulsion is an important advantage for a submarine; but for the most part, it adds only to a surface ship's endurance. In light of our large support fleet and policy of regular replenishment, the cost of nuclear ships (30-50% higher than conventional ships) does not seem justified. Despite its lack of support ships, none of the Soviet navy's surface warships are nuclear-powered. Many critics of current naval policy, such as Admiral Zumwalt, urge repeal of Title VIII and the building of smaller, lighter, non-nuclear ships as the only realistic means of reaching adequate force levels.

Whatever course naval planners follow, a more modest vision of the reach of U.S. seapower will be a permanent feature of our defense policy. No shipbuilding program can restore our naval strength to the position it held before the Soviets developed their surface fleet. Even where the Western nations have clear superiority, the consequences of skirmishing with a capable Soviet fleet are sobering. Nevertheless, it would be irresponsible to deprive ourselves of the capability to aid our allies. Congress has made a strong move to prevent this by increasing ship authorization from 14 new ships in fiscal year 1974 to the current level of about 22 ships per year. Hopefully recent defense cuts are not a signal that Congress will trade this prudent policy for a shortsighted one. □

The Nation's Pulse



by Peter J. Rusthoven

Mr. Justice Douglas

Justice William Orville Douglas, appointed to the Supreme Court by Franklin Roosevelt in 1939, served thirty-six-and-one-half years on the nation's highest bench, longer than any other individual in history. Through seven Presidents, five Chief Justices, and three wars, Douglas was one of the nine men who sit as ultimate arbiters of the law under the United States Constitution. He was famous, as Supreme Court Justices go—probably more famous than any of his colleagues save Chief Justice Earl Warren, whose impeachment was implored by a thousand John Birch Society billboards. And like Warren's, his fame was deserved. Douglas was a charter member of what the press was wont to call the "activist majority" of the famed Warren Court. In the game of ranking in which historians periodically indulge, Justice Douglas is usually placed in the "near great" category. Judged solely in terms of his impact, few can dispute that assessment: throughout his lengthy tenure, which just ended with his resignation in November, Douglas' presence was indubitably felt.

The nature of that impact, however, is a matter of considerable dispute. Like the President who appointed him, Douglas possessed in full measure the capacity to evoke deeply emotional reactions from friend and foe alike. Among liberals, adjectives like "brilliant" and "iconoclastic" garnish respectful tributes to a champion of civil liberties; conservative evaluations are more likely to feature irritated mutterings about "dogmatism," "judicial legislation," and "meddling intervention." My personal reactions, both as a law student and as a staff member of a legal journal, have usually been of the latter variety. Nevertheless, I think Justice Douglas is ultimately best understood in terms of both descriptions. Neither his intelligence nor his devotion to the causes he so diligently espoused can, in my view, be questioned; but I believe as well that the philosophy which came to characterize his approach as a member of the Supreme Court should and must be questioned by all who take seriously the role of law in our constitutional order. To a remarkable degree, William O. Douglas typified much of the best and the worst tendencies of his era.

One cannot in this space attempt an exhaustive analysis of Douglas' judicial output. It is fair to say, however, that at his best Douglas stood as an unswerving advocate for what he perceived as the rights of the individual, particularly when he saw those rights threatened by some conflicting interest of society. As Professor Henry J. Abraham notes with admiration in *Justices & Presidents*, "Douglas has compiled a civil liberties record on the bench second to none: in close to 95 per cent of all cases involving line-drawing between the rights of the individual and those of society, he has sided with the former." Thus, in *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), Douglas wrote for a majority that held unconstitutional that state's anti-contraceptive laws. No specific constitutional prohibition against such legislation could be found, but Douglas was emphatic that the rights of privacy implicit in marriage must lead to invalidation of the offending statutes: "Would we call on the police to search the sacred precincts of marital bedrooms for telltale signs of the use of contraceptives? The very idea is repulsive to the notions of privacy surrounding the marriage relationship." in *Warden v. Hayden* (1967), Douglas was equally emphatic in dissenting from a judgment that upheld a conviction based in part on items of clothing seized during a search of the accused's home. "The constitutional philosophy is, I think, clear. The personal effects and possessions of the individual (all contraband and the like excepted) are sacrosanct from prying eyes, from the long arm of the law, from any rummaging by police.... I would... leave to the individual the choice of opening his private effects (apart from contraband and the like) to the police or keeping their contents a secret and their integrity inviolate. The existence of that choice is the very essence of the right of privacy. Without it the Fourth Amendment and the Fifth are ready instruments for the police state that the Framers sought to avoid."

Unfortunately, the intense personal devotion to individual liberties revealed in the above quotations from *Griswold* and *Hayden* permeated Douglas' philosophy to excess—and in my own judgment, to the exclusion of his being a great Supreme Court Justice. For Douglas' views sprang, in many ways, from a simplistic assessment of the issues and conflicts of modern society. Convinced of the rightness of his beliefs, he had little difficulty deciding that a large number of those beliefs were constitutionally enshrined. And by the end of his extensive period of service to his country, Douglas seemed political and result-oriented to a degree that most of us, I suspect, find inconsistent with the high office it was his privilege to hold.

For a man of his intelligence, Douglas viewed the world in terms of lasting moral simplicity. Issues that perplexed his fellow Justices could evoke from Douglas, as in *Hayden*, righteous, confident warnings about the "police state" lurking in the hazy future for those who opposed his position. To be sure, dire predictions of grave consequences are hardly unusual in the pages of *United States Reports*, particularly in the opinions of dissenting Justices. But Douglas' extrajudicial writings indicate that his dissenting rhetoric was a fairly accurate measure of the depth of his moral understanding. In his autobiography, *Go East, Young Man*, lifelong Democrat Douglas describes his disaffection for the Republican Party in language of stunning superficiality and stereotype: "[Mother] made clear that her resolute commitment was to the Republicans. When I pressed her, she finally said that the Republicans represented the Rich, who hired the entire labor force. 'If the Rich are disenchanted, then we are all unemployed' was her comment.... Sixty years later—in 1972—I sat at a counter in a Washington, D.C., restaurant having a cup of coffee, and the waitress who served me told me the same thing. Mother had been upset when Wilson was elected; this waitress was overjoyed that Nixon won, for the Rich would stay in power and her job as waitress would be secure. Even at the age of fourteen I did not buy that theory, and I soon became an ardent Wilson protagonist." Later in the book, Douglas reveals a starkly simplistic perspective in words that could find comfortable lodging between the covers of *Ramparts*. Discussing one of the four Senators who opposed his confirmation to the Court, Douglas writes: "I did know Lodge and I was honored that he opposed me. 'With him as an enemy, who needs a friend' was the common saying. Lodge's neo-fascist image came into full focus when he served as ambassador to Saigon in 1963 and 1964. But the Lodge whom I early despised was his grandfather, Henry Cabot Lodge, who worked tooth and nail against American adherence to the League of Nations. World solutions of world problems seemed essential to me when I was eighteen. I was bitter at the prejudices shown by the then Establishment. Perhaps that is one reason why in the sixties

and seventies I sided with our youth against the new Establishment that held the reins of power."

Douglas' convictions—firmly rooted in a view of the world where heroes and villains were as clear and uncomplicated as those of any John Wayne epic—found ready expression in his votes as a Justice. In the famous Warren Court revisions of constitutional criminal procedure—*Chimel v. California*, *Mapp v. Ohio*, *Douglas v. California*, *Escobedo v. Illinois*, *Miranda v. Arizona*—Douglas cast not a single dissenting vote. Now I do not propose an extended discussion of the merits of these cases, some of which raise issues considerably more difficult than their many lay critics would admit. The point is simply that Douglas, more than any other Justice with the possible exception of Chief Justice Warren, was perfectly at home with decisions that at least arguably elevated particular social views of proper criminal process to constitutional dimensions. In the again admiring words of Professor Abraham, "The Douglas human rights posture thus would not be checked by the verbiage of the Constitution; if that document did not provide the kind of protection for the individual Douglas deemed necessary to bring about justice under law, well, he would find it..." Illustrations from Douglas opinions abound, but Abraham's citation of *Griswold*, where Douglas found the necessary constitutional support for his position in "penumbras, formed by emanations" from the guarantees of the Bill of Rights, is sufficient for our purposes. Whatever the merits of the *Griswold* decision, its author was clearly an individual who believed that if the result were "right," law and Constitution could and must be made to conform.

In the end, I believe that this overriding concern with reaching substantive results that accorded with his political and social predilections undermined Douglas' stature as a Supreme Court Justice. The problem did not lie in those predilections *per se* (though I personally would quarrel with many aspects of them). Rather, the root difficulty was that in many instances, Douglas seemed guided by the philosophy that the ends in which he deeply believed justified employing any judicial means at his disposal to achieve them. His major shortcoming was thus far from unique among men who hold high office; as the late Professor Alexander M. Bickel pointed out in *The Morality of Consent*, the ends-means morality lurking in many of the landmark decisions of the liberal Warren Court found executive expression in the conservative White House of Richard M. Nixon. In a Supreme Court Justice, however, whose position symbolizes and personifies the rule of law in this country, Douglas' is a particularly tragic failing.

William Douglas was an independent, intelligent, committed Justice. He will be honored as he retires, and rightly so. His work, spanning one-fourth of the bound volumes of all Supreme Court cases, stands at its best as an eloquent reminder of his devotion to the individual rights so cherished in this nation. His retirement will not, I hope, mark a turning from that devotion on the part of the Court. But I hope as well that his flaws as a Justice will prove equally instructive to those who sit on the nation's highest Court—yielding a heightened awareness that law must transcend even the deepest views of those entrusted with its final interpretation, and a renewed commitment to reasoned decision within the limits of a defined constitutional framework. □

Marc Plattner

What Future for Partisan Politics?

As America enters its bicentennial year, there is good reason to believe that its political parties are approaching a critical juncture. In the most recent Presidential election in 1972, Republican Richard Nixon triumphed by a landslide, wining the allegiance of huge numbers of traditionally Democratic voters. It looked as if after 40 years of Democratic preponderance, a new Republican majority might indeed have emerged. A scant two years later, however, the post-Watergate Congressional election of 1974 dealt the Republicans a devastating defeat, and many observers suggested that the GOP had become an endangered species.

These wild fluctuations might be regarded, of course, as mere aberrations, the results of particular events unlikely to be repeated—Watergate in 1974, and the Democrats' "mistake" in nominating George McGovern in 1972. This is the view of those "old-line" Democrats who feel that the old New Deal coalition would still be viable if only their party would discard its New Politics foolishness and nominate the right sort of Presidential candidate. But at almost every other point along the political spectrum there is a widespread feeling that the old patterns of party alignment established by the New Deal are crumbling, and that some new structure is in the process of emerging.

Apart from the results of recent elections, the most striking evidence that significant change is brewing is the decline in party identification among voters. Recent survey data show not only that people's party identification is becoming a less accurate gauge of how they actually vote in Presidential elections, but also that the proportion of the electorate identifying itself as "Independent" has grown dramatically. According to the University of Michigan's Center for Political Studies, the percentage of voters calling themselves "Independent" has grown from 22% in 1952 to an unprecedented high of 37% in 1974. Thus in 1974 the Independents far outnumbered the Republicans (22%) and almost equaled the Democrats (39%). Moreover, the Michigan data reveal that this trend toward Independent status is especially marked among the young: among voters under 30 the number identifying themselves as Independent in 1974 reached an astonishing 51%.

These figures clearly indicate a growing dissatisfaction with the present shape of the two-party system. What is less clear is the kind of change that is likely to be produced by this dissatisfaction. Basically, there are two dominant theories: one which discerns a major party realignment *within* the traditional structure of our two-party system; and a second which holds that that structure *itself* will change.

According to the first of these theories, we are now going through a typical period of party realignment of the sort that has characterized American politics at remarkably regular intervals, demarcated by the "critical elections" of 1800, 1828, 1860, 1896, and 1932. In such elections, a fundamental issue has come to the fore (e.g., slavery in 1860, economic depression in 1932), and has cut across existing party patterns, giving rise to a new majority which dominates the politics of the succeeding generation—until a new issue emerges to produce still another alignment and another majority.

Those who believe that we are currently in such a period of realignment argue, with considerable cogency, that the party configurations generated by the New Deal have, on the Presidential level at least, been all but completely eroded. This assumption underlies the various attempts of left-wing proponents of the New Politics to put together a coalition based upon such groups as ethnic minorities, women, the young, consumerists and environmentalists, and other issue-oriented middle- and upper-class voters. But the most explicit and forceful pronouncements of the expiration of the New Deal party structure have come, not surprisingly, from those who see a new

majority emerging on the Right. Two notable expressions of this view are contained in recent books by prominent conservatives—Kevin Phillips' *Mediacracy* and William Rusher's *The Making of the New Majority Party*.

Rusher's book, as its title indicates, goes beyond analyzing the supposed development of a new majority to assert the need for a new party to serve as its vehicle for coming to power. He thus analogizes the current situation not to the realignment of the 1930s but to that of the 1850s, when the old Whig Party died, and a new party, the Republican, gained rapid dominance. According to Rusher's analysis, the old Roosevelt-era economic division of society between haves and have-nots has given way to a new division pitting "producers... against a new and powerful class of nonproducers comprised of a liberal verbalist elite... and a semi-permanent welfare constituency..." The capture of the Democratic Party by this new class and its allies has led to the defection of those Southerners and working-class ethnics who had formed the bulwark of the New Deal coalition. But the taint of Watergate and the persisting influence of Northeastern liberals within Republican ranks makes the GOP incapable of permanently gaining the loyalties of the defecting Democrats. Rusher characterizes these newly homeless voters as "social conservatives," and he envisions their uniting with traditionally Republican "economic conservatives" to form a new conservative majority party.

Now it is obvious why economic conservatives, who form a decided minority of the electorate, might wish to form such an alliance. But what Rusher never succeeds in making clear is why "social conservatives," whose ranks, at least potentially, are much larger, should want to embrace the economic conservatives. The populist spirit that pervades the social conservatism of the 1970s is often as hostile to corporate elites as it is to media elites, and it is hardly unwilling to have government intervene in the economy for the benefit of the "average American."

This is clearly recognized by Kevin Phillips, who argues that the emerging New Right has little in common with traditional economic conservatism, and is likely to offer "increased support for middle-class economic security programs, control of the economy, assistance for troubled industries, and regulation of media power." Phillips sees the fundamental axis of American electoral politics as the split between the populist South and West and the elitist Northeast. This split was reflected in the 1930s in the overwhelming Southern and Western support for FDR and the relatively strong Republican vote in the Northeast. In 1972, by contrast, Democratic nominee George McGovern performed best in the Northeast and Republican Richard Nixon drew his strongest support from the South and West. Phillips convincingly argues that this shows that a significant realignment has already taken place: the Democratic Party is now the home of a new liberal elite, and a new right-wing populist spirit has migrated to the camp of Republican Presidential candidates.

Phillips is highly critical of Richard Nixon's failure to provide a positive platform for this new "conservative" populist movement, though he is less willing than Rusher to assert that the Republican Party is inherently incapable of performing this task. But despite his uncertainty as to what organizational form it will assume, Phillips has no doubt that right-wing populism is the wave of the future, and he seems to welcome this development heartily. What is curious, however, about both Phillips' critique of the "negativism" of Richard Nixon's political strategy and his enthusiasm for the New Right is his own rather "negativist" characterization of the bases of right-wing populism.

Phillips has next to nothing to say about the positive aims of the new populists, and he makes no effort to extol the good sense and moral virtue of the

common man. His vision of populism is little more than anti-elitism pure and simple—a politics of backlash, anger, and resentment. He points with apparent pride to the fact that those states which most strongly preferred Nixon to McGovern in 1972 share the following traits: "low incomes, many poor, relatively low literacy, low per-pupil expenditures, relatively few symphony orchestras, few library books per capita, low health and welfare, high infant-mortality rates, high motor-vehicle fatality rates, high rates of violent crime."

In an early section of his book entitled "The Traditionalist Reformation," Phillips does make a brief attempt to show that the new right-wing populism involves a reassertion of traditional values. But here he winds up citing such dubiously traditional phenomena as the new ethnicity, the popularity of country music, "booming middlebrow Americana amusements" like Disney World, and widespread nostalgia for the 1950s. In fact, Phillips sees the real seeds of right-wing populism elsewhere. Later in his book he draws the following conclusions from the 1974 findings of pollster Albert Sindlinger: "Socioeconomic selfishness —a concern for status security—rather than commitment to tradition, underlay the new 'conservatism.'" Moreover, Phillips does not shrink from acknowledging that "racial factors" play a significant role in the new populism.

In short, it is highly questionable whether the vague mixture of racial antagonism, "concern for status security," and resentment of liberal elites provides a sufficient basis for a clear-cut and lasting realignment of the American party system. Phillips himself is conscious of this problem, and sometimes admits that "it is... difficult to see a unifying coalition in any of the political groupings of the seventies." Thus, although Phillips never definitively abandons the realignment theory, he also puts forward a second theory which envisages a very different political future—namely, a breakdown, or at least a fundamental transformation, of the traditional American two-party system.

Phillips' argument in support of this second theory is based, in part, upon a confusing, imprecise, and vulgarized version of Daniel Bell's speculations on the shape of post-industrial society. But he is on much stronger ground when he adduces evidence drawn directly from the sphere of electoral politics. Perhaps the most telling piece of evidence that a breakdown of the old party system is in the cards is the rise of ticket splitting. In the critical elections cited by proponents of the realignment theory, the party that gained the Presidency also won a majority in the Congress. Yet in 1972 the magnitude of split-ticket voting was such that the Nixon landslide did little to improve the minority position of Congressional Republicans.

Now it is possible for realignment theorists to argue that the rise in ticket splitting and the decline in party identification are principally temporary phenomena, belonging to an unusually prolonged period of shifting party allegiances. The greatest impact of ticket splitting has been in the South, where deep-rooted local Democratic loyalties have caused shifts in Congressional voting to lag well behind shifts in Presidential voting. But the GOP has been making progress in the South, and it is possible that it will make a breakthrough and gain Southern Congressional majorities. As for the matter of declining party identification, some recent studies have indicated that there was also a huge number of new and uncommitted voters in the years leading up to 1932, and it was FDR's success in capturing and holding these voters which laid the foundations of the New Deal majority. Similarly, the Independents and ticket splitters of the 1970s might conceivably be captured and held by the leader of a new majority.

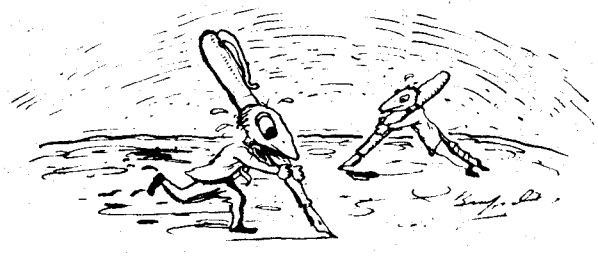
More convincing, however, is the argument that independent voting and ticket splitting are here to stay because of fundamental changes in the structure of American politics and American society that are reawakening our political parties. The growing welfare functions of government have largely rendered superfluous the role of parties as providers of services to their constituents. Incumbent Congressmen, with their enlarged staffs and

their ability to direct federal money into their districts, are able to build up personal support independent of party allegiances. The proliferation of primaries has weakened the role of party leaders, and contributed to a breakdown of party discipline. The increasing dominance of the mass media as a definer and communicator of issues has to a great extent deprived the parties of another of their most essential functions, and has enabled candidates to appeal directly to voters. Similarly, the mass media have helped to develop an electorate which responds more to the personalities and issue positions of candidates than to their party labels. The result of all these seemingly irreversible developments in parties with little coherence, is candidates who are increasingly independent of their parties and voters without much party loyalty.

If this analysis is correct, the prospect of the emergence in the 1970s of a stable new majority comparable to the New Deal coalition is almost nil. Instead, American electoral politics will be moving into an uncertain future, with old structures and loyalties losing their hold, and no clear indication of what will replace them. Moreover, in this uncertain future it is likely that the ideological divisions among the American people will be much less clear-cut than, and perhaps very different from, what Rusher and Phillips expect them to be.

To a considerable extent, Rusher and Phillips still view the Left-Right split in American politics from the perspective of the late sixties. Yet in some respects the New Left has already been decisively defeated, while in other respects the attitudes it promoted have been incorporated into the American mainstream. The McGovern debacle of 1972, the end of the Vietnam war and its attendant domestic unrest, the return of tranquility on the nation's campuses, and the eclipse of militant black and student leaders all signal the failure of New Left hopes for a revolutionary transformation of American society. And yet many themes articulated by the New Left—hostility to business, suspicion of our political leaders and institutions, reservations about economic growth, etc.—are now echoed by a considerable portion of American public opinion. The consequences of this complex development are difficult to foresee, but they are unlikely to lead to a clear triumph for what is conventionally considered the political Right or the political Left. My own hunch is that we will probably be seeing more political figures like California's Governor Jerry Brown who combine liberal and conservative impulses in strange new ways. □

Among the Intellectualoids



by Stephen R. Maloney

Of (Ms.)anthropes and Men

If one has the ms.-fortune to spend several days reading *Ms.* magazine, as I have done, he finishes the task with a new respect for St. Paul's admonition against women speaking in church. Which may be one of the subtler aims of *Ms.* and its Dragon-lady founder and editor-president, Gloria Steinem. The only proper function for a lovely female knee is, in the eyes of this magazine, to be jammed into the groin of one of the male chauvinist pigs who oink their way through the American landscape. The gospel of Women's Liberation according to *Ms.* is nothing if not dialectical: its central thesis is the oppression of all females by (almost) all males. In fact, when writing about women, *Ms.* contributors and editors easily glide into the first person plural; Queen Victoria's imperial "we" becomes the collective "we," women uniting to cast off their chains—to say nothing of their girdles and bras. Thus, Gloria Steinem ("mem. Citizens for Stevenson, 1956" in her *Who's Who* sketch) can write in 1975 of "our [i.e., women's] strong support for Eisenhower." All women, in this view, are not only created equal but also indistinguishable. Ditto for men, The Enemy. If we accept *Ms.*'s definition of the social situation, with males and females glaring at each other across a rhetorical no man's (no person's?) land, then we deserve to perish in the verbal mustard gas dispensed by that magazine.

Responding to some hate-America clatter in *Ms.* by Angela Davis, a reader asks in the October issue whether "conservative" and other nonradical women can be feminists, so that The Movement might become something other than a splinter in the foot of the body public. This well-meaning person is ms.-ing the point. For men are only strawpersons in the ostensible battle of the sexes orchestrated by Steinem and her Amazonian cohort. What *Ms.* wishes for our land is not the matriarchy of Lysistrata nor the autocracy of Comrade Davis but the Manhattanization of America, the imposition of the values of the erstwhile Lindsay supporter, the "with it" New Yorker. *Ms.* wants to "raise the consciousness" (that is, fanaticize the behavior) of all those matrons and maidens who are dissatisfied in Des Moines and frustrated in French Lick.

The initial instinct of the reasonably conscious person who wants to write about *Ms.* is to satirize its pretensions, its jargon, its galloping misanthropy. But there is a peculiarly contemporary problem here, as novelist-poet Marion Montgomery has pointed out in another context: "Satire is scarcely possible in literary mode in an age where absurdity is so vast as to prevent enlargement." How, for instance, would one go about parodying the style of a typical *Ms.* essay (by Robin Morgan): "Today, my sexuality unfolds in ever more complex, beautiful, and self satisfying layers. Today, I can affirm my mother and identify with her beyond all my intricate ambivalence." This witches' brew of egotism (we-gotism?) and pleonasm makes us feel that if God had been a feminist—as *Ms.* assures us (S)He was—He would not have rested on the seventh day but on the seven hundredth, right after creating the Affirmative Action Committee. The cure for prose such as Morgan's is not literary criticism but rather the ducking stool.

We can, and assuredly should, laugh at *Ms.*, but the triumph of, for instance, Bella Abzug, should warn us that mere ludicrousness cannot always provoke contempt from the multitudes. We may, in short, end up by dying laughing. Obviously, a half-million *Ms.* readers can be wrong, but that would be news to Walter Cronkite and his brethren. This periodical (who would dare call it a monthly?) fills, as an advertising man said of another product, "a much-needed void." It is an almost-perfect vehicle for modern intellectualoidism.

Much of the anguish, real and imagined, that surfaces in *Ms.* grows out of the illusion of national omnipotence created by the successes of modern technology, from the space flights to the birth

control pill. The feminist intellectualoid asks questions of this sort: "If we can send a spaceperson to the moon, why can't we invent a machine to change the baby's diaper?" One doesn't need Norman Mailer to tell us, although he did in *The Prisoner of Sex*, that it is an exaggerated faith in technology that sends apparently sane women hurtling off into the circumambient gas of feminist rhetoric. We get in *Ms.* the same kind of Utopian babble that Orwell called "Wellsian" and described, in his sexist way, as "the paradise of little fat men." In *The Road to Wigan Pier* Orwell enunciated an important insight that goes far toward explaining the verbal fishwifery of the people who write for *Ms.*: "All mechanical progress is towards greater and greater efficiency; ultimately, therefore, toward a world in which *nothing goes wrong.*"

But we, following Murphy's Law rather than Wells', live in a world where everything that can go wrong does. After a great deal of prayer, meditation, and toothgrinding, *Ms.* has decided this deplorable condition (the human condition, that is) is the fault of men. Most of the writers who plop their leaden prose upon the pages of *Ms.* are old-fashioned perfectibilitarians; they move easily from agreeable, if idle, forms of idealism ("peace on earth") to a frothing millenialism. "Feminism is... a profoundly radical and perpetually enlarging vision of what can save this planet" (Robin Morgan). And this from the Magna Mater of the Movement, Gloria Steinem: "In Women's Lib Utopia, there will be free access to good jobs—and decent pay for bad ones.... Increased skilled labor might lead to a four-hour workday, and higher wages would encourage further mechanization of repetitive jobs..." (*Time*, 1970).

Ms. has concluded that our "sexist" society causes the mass of women to lead lives of quiet desperation. Living off the daydreams and the frustrations of the housewife (real or potential) for whom the clubs, the station wagons, and the soap operas will no longer suffice, *Ms.* prospers. It is in the magazine's interest to nurture feminine frustration by serving as a veritable bubble-machine of Liberationist dreams. In keeping with the "Let's Pretend" tone of the Women's Movement, *Ms.* has inaugurated a new series, the "Celestial Suggestion Box"; the editors, if they had their due and ran society, would, among other gentle proddings, "require cops to spend a month in jail incognito"; "require all city employees to use public transportation" and to live in the city where they work; "ban the sale of handgun ammunition"; "pass a law requiring" children to carry until age 18 the names of both parents—at which time a surname (her name?) could be chosen; "make it" cost more for third-class mail than for first. Observe, gentle reader, the operative verbs in these "suggestions." The Empress now presumably slouching toward these shores to be born does not fool around. But, as Gloria says, "If Women's Lib wins... we all do." Whether we want to or not.

Gloria. The girl of every *Ms.* reader's dreams (and especially, one guesses, of the numerous Lesbian subscribers' reveries). She is the whited sepulchre of Women's Lib. Not many male journalists can resist a few leers and some lip-smacking when giving a brief mention to her fine mind and then hurrying on to the important parts: her fashionably-streaked, Clairol girl hair, her Grablesque legs, her Venus de Milo breasts, her Sweetheart-of-Sigma-Chi face. She is, in Leonard Levitt's compelling phrase, the "intellectual's pin-up." As Clay Felker, Gloria's former editor at *New York*, is rumored to have said, "With those legs that girl ought to be a writer." Alas, her mind is something other than fine (one suspects softening of the brain from total immersion in clichés), her prose style is nothing but lumpish, her conversation only the gramophone-in-human-form jargon of the 1960s. But with her beauty and her trendiness, Gloria is to Women's Lib what Catfish Hunter is to the New York Yankees: "The Franchise." In the words of Tom Wolfe, "the press would rather have Gloria be Women's Liberation than the other trolls under the bridge."

And trolls they seem to be. An editorial conference at *Ms.*, one speculates, deserves nothing less than the talents of Hieronymus Bosch to memorialize it. What kind of women edit *Ms.*? The kind who can find the following statement striking enough to capsulize and italicize: "*It is possible to give birth in an American hospital and feel grateful that you did so.*"

Ms. correspondents seem to spend a lot of time in hospitals (although not enough, some might say), what with the need for abortions and "related services." Little wonder then, given their general hostility toward their motherhood, that they reject the doctrines of Marcus Welby. Susan Lydon avows that hospital obstetrical care is "a metaphor for the lack of respect for human life inherent in American culture." Consider the fascistic treatment her newborn received when "she" (some people have all the luck) entered this vale of tears. "She was yanked up by her feet, slapped on the bottom, weighed, eyedropped, bracelet-ted, cleaned, dressed, handed briefly to me for inspection...." Now let's be reasonable: a woman who can become outraged by her baby's being weighed, cleaned, and given an identification bracelet (the better to bring your own baby home) belongs in that segment of the Johnny Carson show where the speaker makes a statement and the audience, in simulated sympathy and indignation, shouts: "*Yeah!*" American hospitals, it is true, have found that a large majority of mothers much prefer their babies' being "eyedropped" to the possibilities of syphilitic blindness, but let that pass.

Ms. Lydon's references to her own experiences exemplify *Ms.*'s attitude toward recent history, public and private. Those who forget the (recent) past are condemned not to feel upset about it, the magazine implies. The people in *Ms.* all seem to have attended the chic girls' school in Jarrell's *Pictures from an Institution*, the college whose suggested motto was: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you feel guilty." Nora Sayre, in a piece on Kent State, laments that the students of today don't firebomb the ROTC building with the vigor of yore. Wild generalizations blossom in her essay like warts on a rotten squash: "In the Sixties, when foreign policy grew more demented, while Nixon assured the peace movement he wasn't listening, it seemed inevitable to some of us that protest took more frantic shapes—as many became desperate to gain his attention." One gets an absurd image of a gaggle of hirsute, glazed-eyed SDSers debating whether or not to blow up the Math Building so as to gain Nixon's attention. If we asked Sayre who the "some of us" who knew all these marvelous things were, we would obtain perhaps the complete guest list for the Cesar Chavez and Black Panther affairs (Gloria Steinem procured the mariachi band for the former). *Ms.* reflects the politics of nostalgia, the time when Dr. Spock, Bill Coffin, and the kids marched shoulder to shoulder through the canyons of Manhattan, the days when there were real Enemies of the People and the cry was "Tricky you-know-who and Agnew too." Other than an occasional swelling in the breast when every fortnight or so a woman takes a shot at Betty Ford's "oppressor," feminist political activity seems to consist today of shouting "ERA Now" and of abstaining from Gallo wine.

The paucity of good Nixonite villains to hate is reflected in the choice of subjects in some recent *Ms.* articles. Never have so many writers said so much about so little. Take, for example, Curtis Ingham writing on feminist graffiti; the author takes an eminently ignorable subject and establishes only that feminist graffiti are as dreary as their male counterparts. Ingham tells us, cheerleader fashion, that "graffiti are the Voice of the People and, as such, are very often courageous, honest, and inspiring." This, as the bathroom wall might reply, is pure b*ll-sh*t. Disagree? Sample this selection from Ingham's excited stall-gatherings: "Long live popular unity in Chile." There's something for the disorganized leftists to rally 'round. Or consider these ringing words: "There are no bitches, only women in an intolerable situation." Finally, one for the *Ms.* Hall of Fame: "It's my body, and having a child is *my* decision." *Mon Dieu.* Feminists *italicize* their graffiti. (In keeping with *Ms.*'s usual attitudes toward language, the anonymous defacement of property is "courageous" and "honest.")

In fact, the same kind of linguistic *dreck* that defaces the walls debases the magazine, especially on the "It's *my* body" question of abortion. Although some will not agree, this is a question that divides people of good will, a problem that finds conservatives, libertarians, and liberals in various uneasy alliances.

The questions involved are overwhelming: what is the nature of life? when does life begin? what is the responsibility of a mother to her fetus (formerly known as the "unborn child")? But by reducing discussion of the issue to the shibboleth of "It's *my* body," *Ms.* refuses to admit that there are big questions and moral problems involved, or that abortion can be morally repugnant to many thoughtful people.

What is worse, *Ms.* combines its amorality with an authoritarian attempt to impose its own standards (or more precisely, its lack of standards) on everyone else. Those nurses and physicians who refuse for moral or religious reasons to perform abortions are to be offered two choices: (1) perform abortions; or (2) give up their professions. *Ms.* also opposes (in its "Gazette" of September 1975) state laws "which require measures to save a viable fetus." One assumes that such "viable" organisms are lucky to have the protection of the United States Constitution and a Judaeo-Christian tradition that turns out to have a good many more maternal instincts than the good ladies of *Ms.*

In this connection, we laugh when we read in *Animal Farm* about everyone being equal but some being more equal than others. *Ms.* demands the authority to make everyone equal. It dreams of a world where everything is regulated—except the behavior of feminists. We are to require, in short, where policemen live and how doctors practice their religion, but we are to say nothing about the question of abortion—except to announce perhaps when the local clinic is having a two-for-one sale. In her *Time* essay Miss Steinem appears quite willing to take the oath as the Commissar in Charge of the Equalization of Everything. There will be an "equalization of parental responsibility." There are to be "free nurseries" (everything is free in Women's Lib); moreover, there are going to be "family cafeterias built into every housing complex." Don't like housing complexes? Up against the wall, father figure. Finally, there will be "more responsibility by the entire community for the children; all these will make it possible for both the mother and the father to work." In other words, Big Brother *and* Big Sister are going to be watching you. Miss Steinem is —one is tempted to say "luckily"—beyond child-bearing age, like the narrator's wife in Swift's "Modest Proposal." In any case, one of those aptly-named Women's Libbers named Shulamith Firestone has, in *The Dialectics of Sex*, rendered Gloria's proposals almost, well, modest. All that Ms. Firestone asks for is the "elimination... of the sex distinction itself." Scaling such dialectical heights, the reader almost yearns for the graffiti.

And yet *Ms.* and its "philosophy" do have influence. Leonard Levitt subtitles his superb *Esquire* piece, "The awesome power of Gloria Steinem." The "Women's Movement" has frightened more politicians (into voting for the ERA, for example) than the combined lobbyists of the Fortune 500 top companies. *Ms.* is pregnant with full-color ads sponsored by our friendly corporate giants, many of which are being sued by various women's organizations, but which realize how profitable it is to advertise their products in anticapitalist magazines. To its credit, American business looks uncomfortable in *Ms.*, something like the Chairman of the Board in his undershirt when the police break down the door at the massage parlor; nevertheless, the glossy corporate spreads tell us much both about business and about a magazine which purports to hate it. The question here is who is the co-opter and who the co-optee (co-optress?)? One imagines that some of the plastic gewgaws sold at Peace rallies were constructed in part of materials developed by Dow Chemical.

It is the classified ads which are most

revealing, for it is there that *Ms.* takes it all off. Down in the trenches, the classifieds, the key word is *liberated*. We have "liberating Blue Work Shirts" (if not a collection of oxymorons, perhaps an appeal to the lady who used to read *True Confessions*). For the woman who used to think she had everything: "Liberating vibrators." Whenever two or three feminists are gathered together, they organize, with "Dignity"—e.g. for "gay Catholics." Astrographology, numerology, and astrology parade their wares; and a horde of counselors, psychotherapists, and operators of "feeling centers" (for casualties of the sexual revolution?) compete for clients. One of my favorite *Ms.* ads is one from September: "Attend German Democratic Republic Conference, East Berlin, October 20 to 25th, 1975 and learn their advanced feminist views." (Aren't you sorry you missed it?) What, after all, is a little bourgeois political freedom when male and female stonemasons and barbed-wire stringers work side by side heroically building a sturdy wall that, among other things, keeps out reactionary views about feminism? And, if you don't like it in East Berlin, why then join one of the numerous "Grief groups," or if you are rendered speechless, a "Gestalt, nonverbal analytic group" should suffice.

One wishes more *Ms.* writers might learn the values of nonverbalism. For the major impact of the magazine is not in the Board Room of G.M., or even in the catacombs of HEW, but in the way Americans use their language. A point made by Orwell in "Politics and the English Language" seems appropriate here: "When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish squirting out ink." In reading *Ms.* one always has the feeling that the lady is never indicating precisely what she means to say. For example, when Gloria Steinem talks about Women's Lib producing "a radical redefinition of sin," one suspects she means that the cathedrals are going to be turned into day-care centers. Moreover, because it has established its credentials as a radical publication, *Ms.* can get away with using the more fashionable varieties of racial putdowns. A few examples: Jamaica Kincaid says that if Mick Jagger were black he could sing rhythm and blues, but being white he has to settle for number two, rock. Warming up, Kincaid condemns "Labelle," a popular black singing group, by saying that their "beat" is more reminiscent of white songstresses than blacks. Sounding like a black Grand Kleagle, Kincaid informs us that "white audiences recognize the superiority of most black entertainment." Take *that*, you sexist honkies.

Along with its rhetorical venom and sheer mindlessness, *Ms.* is famous for its veritable jargon factory. All those "chairpersons" and "spokespersons," to say nothing of delights such as "penwomanship" and "personkind." Even more depressing, we are flooded with the stagnant waters of existentialism: "growth potential," "self-realization," and even "identity crisis." One turns the pages of *Ms.* almost expecting to find the complete speeches of Mrs. Mike Gravel. Jargon is the tool of the person who once had something to say but has forgotten what it was. The cliché is the mental spasm of the person who "sleeps like a baby," even while writing an article. Observe the verbal behavior of one *Ms.* correspondent who follows a questionable assertion with two clichés. "Unfortunately, it is a great deal easier to make a [nuclear] bomb than to make a car. This is the lesson the world learns with sorrow as it watches the list of nuclear nations grow." *Ms.* has 16 editor-persons but no grammarians or semanticists. Linguistically, the magazine is much in need of a her-sterectomy.

The slavish adherence to the ideal of mechanical progress has something to do with *Ms.*'s linguistic failings. In the fluorescent, plasticized world of the computer, language is superfluous, save for the pseudo-language of binary mathematics. There, 1 plus 1 equals 10. And so it does in *Ms.* For pure verbal incompetence, unstayed by any editorial hand, consider the following from Howard Cosell in the October issue. A lawyer before he began singing dithyrambs to Mean Joe Greene, Howard "comes out" as a supporter of ERA. He says, hilariously, that ERA opponents use arguments that are "prima facie, which is a term in law that more or less means 'absurd.' " *Prima facie* means "absurd" about the way that Gloria Steinem means Olive Oil. Another aspiring lexicographer (a female) in the same issue talks about her numerous and

ongoing love affairs and then announces, "I know I will periodically return to celibacy." One periodically returns to that condition about the way one periodically returns to virginity. A little language, *Ms.* demonstrates, is a dangerous thing.

From the very first issue, where Ann Crittenden Scott had the average housewife working 100 hours a week (hardly leaving her time to be a sex object), the magazine has manifested the "intellectual hatred" characteristic of those "hysterical women" that Yeats condemned in his poetry. As a fugitive from the politicized 1960s, the magazine points up the real thrust of that decade: the elimination of distinctions—sexual, moral, and intellectual. In addition, as Midge Decter has shown in her brilliant *The New Chastity*, Women's Movement radicals are involved in a desperate war against nature itself. Decter sees the "true grievance" of Women's Lib as not discrimination but as anger at the fact of being women. Of the Liberationist designation of motherhood as a condition of victimization, Decter says: "For women to claim that they are victims when they are so clearly not is merely an expression of their terror in the face of the harshnesses and burdens of a new and as yet not fully discovered freedom."

We can note about the *Ms.*-fits what Orwell did about the journalistic intellectuals of his land, "their severance from the common culture of the country." There is, furthermore, an appalling, unnatural mean-spiritedness in much of the Women's Movement. In an article, "But What About Our Sons?," two *Ms.* correspondents mention how "one pregnant woman told us—within earshot of her three-year-old son—how disappointed she had been that he had been a boy." And another mother: "I censor all his books. We gave him a unisex name deliberately." Slavery is Liberation, in other words.

After a long session reading—and writing about—this feminist screed one sees with clarity that *Ms.* is the reflection of both the debased politics and the corrupt language spawned by the overheated imaginations of our time. In an age hesitant to make any distinctions, *Ms.* solves problems by ignoring or obscuring them. *Ms.* wants not so much to pass the ERA as to repeal the laws of nature; the hallmark of the authoritarian mind is that it cannot bear diversity. Thus, for all the talk about "new freedom" and "liberation," the real drama underlying the sound and the fury of the magazine is an old one. It is the conflict between the Grand Inquisitor, offering bread and miracles (i.e., technological breakthroughs) and the man or woman willing to accept the terrifying, but exhilarating, burden of freedom. □

Book Review/Eugene H. Methvin

Boogers, Haints, and Bunco Artists

Six or seven moons ago, a *New York Times* reporter ventured into the Tennessee hinterland town of Dayton to check on the enlightenment and progress of its denizens upon the fiftieth anniversary of the famed Monkey Trial. He obviously had a hard time of it. Nobody seemed to care much about the teaching of evolution anymore, one way or other. The oldtimers had mellowed. For Bryan the Defender of Genesis, there was a modicum of admiration. Even for Darrow the Devil's Disciple, they harbored modest respect. And for the Infidel Scopes, there was positive affection, but of a low and altogether unnewsworthy amperage.

Only one figure, the Timesman found, still raised any hackles. That was the newspaper reporter who covered the extravaganza for the *Baltimore Sun*—Henry Louis Mencken. The very mention of his name was enough to evoke muttered imprecations, steam hissing from the ears, and an occasional *pa-tooehy*, sans tobacco juice, alas, progress and vogue having generally extinguished such habits among the Daytonians in this enlightened era.

What kind of a newspaperman was this whose shade can cause such eruptions after fifty years, yes, almost twenty after his bones have been lowered to their final roasting place?

He was the Baltimore Whangdoodle, that's what—probably the most gifted and gaudy magnifico ever to practice American journalism, and certainly a unique specimen. Whatever else he was—man of letters, magazine editor, historian of the American language—H.L. Mencken was first, foremost, and perdurably a newspaperman. His career as working journalist spanned a half-century, 1898-1948.

And, praises be, here at long last we have an anthology of Mencken the newspaperman, pieces he wrote on the craft and state of American journalism collected and packaged together with a biographical appreciation by Theo Lippman, Jr. This worthy, an editorial writer for the *Sun*, inherited in his office a splintery old filing cabinet once used by Mencken himself, and some spiritual vibration therefrom moved the young man to present us with this convenient collection; only one of these pieces has ever appeared in a book, and now we have them between two covers in 206 pages, including the anthologist's 28-page essay on the subject's newspaper career.

A Gang of Pecksniffs—
And Other Comments on Newspaper Publishers, Editors and Publishers

by H.L. Mencken
edited by Theo Lippman, Jr.
Arlington House $8.95

What a timely good fortune! Young America is about to be set atwittering by the movie version of the *Washington Post*'s young tyros, Bernstein and Woodward, reincarnated and beatified by that matinee beauty Robert Redford and by counter-hero Dustin Hoffman, slaying Richard the Terrible and his White House horribles. Already the deans of journalism schools are being trampled flat by thundering posses of would-be world-savers who are suddenly impressed with the power of the pen and the plethora of unemployables tumbling from other more theoretical and useless academic assembly lines. The good deans would do well to greet all aspirants at the door, hand each a copy of this work, and see which can read a book written in American English.

Not that the reading would necessarily inspire them with the ideals and ethics of their prospective profession! If for reasons of budget escalation the deans want to accept all comers including even those who cannot read, they might well impose as an alternate test attendance at the movie *Jaws*, instructing the neophytes to study carefully the shark. For either exercise would prepare them equally for the low estate to which they aspire, as Mencken clearly elucidates.

Indeed, he shows quite convincingly that the journalist, the politician, and the shark all share common arts and appetites, and perform quite similar functions in our society. That function is, quite simply, scaring the hell out of the American people, occasionally devouring a few hapless victims; and then showily rescuing us all at the last minute from the menace. For Mencken, much of the practice of journalism, as of politics, involves a kind of humbugging akin to the making of the movie *Jaws*, and the creation and marketing of that fish with six-inch teeth. Behold:

"Truth is a commodity that the masses of undifferentiated men cannot be induced to buy. The causes thereof lie deep

down in the psychology of the *Homo boobus*, or inferior man—which is to say, of the normal, the typical, the dominant citizen of a democratic society.... Unless a newspaper can manage to arouse his *feelings* it might just as well not have at him at all, for his feelings are the essential part of him, and it is out of them that he dredges up his obscure loyalties and aversions. Well, and how are his feelings to be stirred up? At bottom, the business is quite simple. First scare him—and then reassure him. First get him into a panic with a bugaboo—and then go to the rescue, gallantly and uproariously, with a stuffed club to slay it. First fake him—and then fake him again. This, in substance, is the whole theory and practice of the art of journalism in These States... All healthy journalism in America—healthy in the sense that it flourishes spontaneously and needs no outside aid—is based firmly upon just such an invention and scotching of bugaboos. And so is all politics."

That, in a capsule, is a wholly coherent and comprehensive philosophy of journalism, soundly based upon clinical observation. And from 1920 when it was set down to today, nothing has changed, in either politics or journalism. Well, possibly minor changes, but of detail and not of essence. For example, today we have more sophisticated audiences, but we also have more sophisticated practitioners, and the politicians and journalists have learned to collaborate more artfully in bamboozling the yokels. Indeed, they have even learned how to enlist the scientists upon occasion, all the more to pump up their blimpish horrors before rushing to the rescue.

Vide the Great Phosphate scare, or the Great Cyclamate scare, which were supposed to turn our lakes and streams to green soup and our bone cells to metastatic cannibals, each of which caused popular stampedes and economic earthquakes costing millions, and neither of which has proved more than a politico-journalistic haint. Yet history must march, so no intrepid investigative journalist has yet doubled back to see who invented and sensationalized those scares and why; they are all off baying at other game, mainly along the wooded banks of the Potomac in the Virginia hunt country where dwell the nation's flesh-and-blood spooks. No doubt ultimately those boogers will prove to be of comparable mortal danger to our national safety and welfare. And meantime, the journalists will have provided orgiastic entertainment to all the baccalaureated boobs who feel they should salivate at every revelation of governmental secrecy, snoopery, and trickery as if such were not the norm among governments grand and petty.

Another Mencken essay, entitled "Newspaper Morals," is as fine an essay on the high journalistic art of character assassination as any I have ever read, and it appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1914, before Lenin became celebrated for it, and long antedating the appearance of such eminent twentieth century men of letters as Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Jack Anderson. This essay would make an excellent preface for an anthology of Anderson columns such as those that set the Senate sharks on the late Sen. Thomas J. Dodd of Connecticut. Thus:

"On the one hand, the astute journalist must remember the public's incapacity for taking in more than one thing at a time, and on the other hand, he must remember its disposition to be swayed by mere feeling, and its habit of founding that feeling upon general and indefinite impressions. Reduced to a rule of everyday practice, this means that the campaign against a given malefactor must begin a good while before the capital accusation—that is, the accusation upon which a verdict of guilty is sought—is formally brought forward. There must be a shelling of the fortress before the assault; suspicion must precede indignation.... The accomplished mob-master lays his course accordingly."

* * *

Perhaps Mencken's most trenchant opus on newspaper editorial pages is not in the book. He wrote it in 1928 by request of *Baltimore Evening Sun* managing editor Paul Patterson for a confidential critique. Anthologist Lippman was prevented from including it by a peck-sniff professor retained by Mencken's estate-managers to bring out a forthcoming volume of unpublished letters. But Lippman managed to bootleg in a tantalizing and illuminating quote:

"Most men are convinced, not by appeals to their reason, but by appeals to their emotions and prejudices. Such emotions and prejudices are not necessarily ignoble. It is just as creditable to hate injustice and dishonesty as it is to love the truth. One of the chief purposes of the *Sun*, as I understand it, is to stir up such useful hatreds."

Indeed, one of the chief purposes of every journalist worth his salt is "*to stir up useful hatreds*." The matter has probably not been put with such clarity and brevity since Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Hatreds useful in whose judgment and whose definition of utility? To what end? "That common thread that tied together all of Mencken's writings and beliefs," says Lippman, was "the libertarian's insistence that individuals should be free to do what they please if their acts do not harm others." Mencken himself, in a 1937 memo to Paul Patterson, put it thus:

"I believe that the safe and rational course for the papers themselves is still that of Liberalism, and that we should be watchful of radical propaganda by our own men. We should fight resolutely at all times for the chief Liberal goods, all of them well tested and of the highest value, e.g., the limitation of governmental powers, economy in all the public services, complete publicity, the greatest tolerable degree of free speech, and a press secure against official pressure. There is nothing for a decent newspaper in radicalism. If it ever succeeds in this country our function will be gone, and with it our liberties. They will be gone equally whether the radicalism that comes in is of the Right or of the Left."

The truth-in-packaging cops would manacle Mencken for labeling such a package "Liberal" today, of course. The point should be of more than antiquarian interest for aspirant journalists today. So should Mencken's recommendations on news policy:

"In controversial matters the news can never be one side only; it must be both sides. It seems to me that the American newspapers, in the face of the immense propaganda now flooding them, have forgotten or neglected that capital fact. In an effort to let everyone be heard they have given all the advantage to the most vocal and enterprising side. They will never be doing their duty until they invent some way to strike a better balance. They will not be printing the true news until they show what is behind every effort to corrupt it...

"The ordinary flow of news is partial in two senses. It covers the field inadequately, and a large part of it is launched by persons with private interests to further. Not infrequently those private interests are adroitly disguised as public interests, but their real character remains. We must try to penetrate them and to counteract them. We must detect the falsities, whether of fact or of inference, in the news they launch, and set beside that news a kind that is more realistic and reliable.

"At the present time that effort is especially necessary, for we confront a high development of government propaganda in both domestic and foreign affairs.... It should be our fixed policy to be very suspicious of what is generally said and generally believed, and to set forth, whenever possible, the other side.... [We should bring] the power of sound information and impartial honesty against the immense effects of government propaganda, with its constant appeals to the lowest credulities of the people, and its playing on their tendency to believe in and even to worship conspicuous public officials. I do not propose that we denounce the Administration incessantly and unreasonably; I only propose that we view it skeptically, and refuse to assent to its devices and pretensions until we are sure that they are intelligent and sincere. Every public official with large powers in his hands should be held in suspicion until he proves his case, and we should

keep him at all times in a glare of light."

If the reformers in Congress were to create an independent federal regulatory commission to enforce such principles among today's practitioners of journalism, we would all be spared a colossal amount of buncombe. And a great many of the bunco artists who pass for editors and investigative reporters nowadays would be turned out to pasture with politicians, public interest lawyers, lobbyists, evangelists, and other quacks.

For a seasoned Mencken aficionado, the surprise of this tome is the revelation that the old man could wax as sentimental as Kiwanian undertaker about the altruism and idealism of his craft. We read, for example, that "The first job of a newspaper, to be sure, is to print the news, and nowhere on earth is it done more diligently or more honestly than in this great free Republic, the envy and despair of all the decadent principalities of Europe." H.L. was above all a scoffer, and won fame as such, so it is astonishing to see that he harbored and occasionally gushed positive opinions; the spectacle makes him seem as preposterous as any other booster he ever roasted alive. *Et tu*, Henry? □

Book Review/Bill Kucewicz

Did the Good Guys Really Win?

Since that fateful Thursday in August of 1974, it has become fashionable to chastise those of the American public who supposedly kept their rose-colored glasses on too long and thus failed to see that President Nixon had been "guilty" all along. Like old aunts with their predictions-come-true, a number of writers have felt the need to tell us their versions of the inside story—which, if we had only known, would have convinced us long before of the President's guilt. Until now the inside story has been mainly focused upon the inner workings of the Nixon White House, but Jimmy Breslin has written a work that ventures beyond these perimeters and looks at Watergate from the vantage point of Capitol Hill.

In *How the Good Guys Finally Won*, Breslin shows us a glimpse of Congressional backroom politics during the confusing and difficult period prior to Nixon's resignation, and as a behind-the-scenes look at how Congress acted in a time of crisis, the book is invaluable. Breslin's argument, however, is seriously flawed and much too simplistic. Presidents, in his view, are bad guys, because the Presidency, as it exists today, is a power-hungry institution that tends to subvert the wishes of all the people. Congressmen are good guys, because Congress is the most representative national institution. Watergate was basically a case of popular representatives versus the public leader—the good guys versus the bad guy—and it was a glorious occasion because Congress (i.e., the people) triumphed.

Breslin doesn't always put things so simply. He frequently conceals his thoughts behind such imagery as "mirrors and blue smoke." At one point he contends that "all political power is primarily an illusion. If people think you have power, you have power. If people think you have no power, then you have no power." There is certainly a good deal of truth to this Machiavellian view, yet Breslin shows no understanding of our Constitutional system, of where power should lie and how it should be used. He applauds the ascendancy of Congress, because he thinks it closest to the popular will. That view may be correct, but the crucial issue is whether a country *should* be led by the popular will.

There is—and this cannot be overly emphasized—a crucial difference between the popular will and what has traditionally been called the "common good"; this distinction, if not made carefully and continuously, will become blurred over time and will serve to undercut the strengths of a democratic republic. The popular will, which the Founding Fathers clearly intended to be represented for the most part by Congress, is a constantly fluctuating stream of opinion that provides government with the necessary feedback by which it can guage its actions. The popular will is a response to the leadership of government; it is not intended to chart the course of government, but rather only to give government its bearings. It is the leaders of government who are responsible for defining, and of course pursuing, the common good—i.e., those policies which will not necessarily give the populace immediate gratification, but which will give society a solid, lasting order within which it can continue to function freely and progressively.

How the Good Guys Finally Won

by Jimmy Breslin
Viking Press $6.95

The Founding Fathers, recognizing this essential distinction, balanced the powers within government to restrain the aggrandizement of power not only by the executive but also by the legislature. They feared a monopoly of power in the hands of the legislature as much as they feared that the executive might become a monarch, for they understood the strong tendency in the legislature to reflect private or popular interests rather than the common good. It is this tendency which in the aftermath of Watergate many, including Breslin, have become blinded to.

What seems to make this tendency all the more pervasive is the general attitude of cynicism on the part of many writers and other political pundits, like Breslin, that has become so entrenched over the last year. In *How the Good Guys Finally Won* Breslin holds up Congressman Tip O'Neill for the highest esteem precisely because he was convinced of coming impeachment at a time when "there wasn't even a shred of documentation, only a race-track suspicion by one Congressman." Because their conviction was "vindicated" on that August night, such pundits think that their views of the Presidency and their air of cynicism are therefore justified. This is not a healthy attitude.

Cynicism tends not to lead to improvements in our condition; in fact it tends to blind us to information and opinions that lie outside of our purview. Indeed, it is self-righteousness carried to its most dangerous extreme for it constrains our ability to change, a characteristic essential for the survival of any government (or society). In the aftermath of Watergate, the distinction between cynicism and skepticism has become increasingly blurred; to say that an action by government (or for that matter business) which ostensibly goes counter to popular opinion (e.g., oil decontrol, the Russian wheat deals, Presidential vetoes) is in fact in the common good is more and more frequently to invite sneers and derision. Skepticism of the actions of government is an essential component of the popular will because it leads to constructive improvements. Cynicism, on the other hand, can only serve to undermine the popular foundations of government because it misdirects our focus away from the actions which may provide long-term benefits to society towards only those which can be immediately realized.

This is one of "the lessons of Watergate" that we have yet to learn: Just because President Nixon eventually admitted his involvement, does not mean that those who said all along that he was "guilty" were at all justified; if anything, they were doing the country a great dis-

service by not trusting that our political system would function as swiftly and justly as most of us have come to believe. These cynics demonstrated the age-old desire of wanting to take the law into their own hands. The skeptics thought that the mounting evidence warranted a Congressional inquiry, but instead of passing judgment themselves they preferred to rely on our Constitutional process. For this reason, they were, and hopefully will continue to be, the backbone of the Republic.

There is a very real danger, as a result of all that has followed Watergate, that we now face a permanent shift in the balance of power in government. If we decide to amplify the power of the legislature while diminishing that of the executive, we may create a climate in which the pursuit of popular or narrow interests through the use of governmental power will flourish. And, if cynicism comes to dominate popular opinion, we may fail to see what Madison so emphatically warned us about: The aggrandizement of power by the Congress whose aim would be the satisfaction of popular wants and not that which would be in the common good. □

Book Review/W. Wesley McDonald

The Order of the Ages

"Books often reflect the spirit of the age," observed Russell Kirk six years ago in his *Enemies of the Permanent Things*, "but also books can conjure up the spirit of the age. Good literature alters the climate of opinion, and the shape of society, for the better, while the literature of decadence, or the decay of literary tradition, can undermine the commonwealth." It can hardly be unexpected that the greater bulk of books which will appear during this Bicentennial period, hailing the American founding, will "reflect the spirit of the age" in their concentration on America's tradition of social dissent and revolution. *The Roots of American Order*, however, swims against the popular intellectual currents of our time through its distinctive examination of the foundations of America's order. Kirk's broader Judeo-Christian perspective, challenging much of what is found in the prevailing schools of interpretation, makes this a welcome contribution to the literature of American political thought.

Kirk traces within this large book (534 pages) those ideas and institutions which have influenced most significantly the maintenance and preservation of the American social and political order. Historically, the book ranges from the Hebrew prophets to the middle of the nineteenth century. Geographically, the book maps the contributions made by five cities to America's vision of order: Jerusalem, Athens, Rome, London, and Philadelphia. Kirk's intent is not only descriptive, but prescriptive as well. "This book is meant," he writes, "to water roots for the renewing of order, and the betterment of justice and freedom." Consequently, the book is partly a historical commentary, partly a history of ideas, and partly political advocacy. Because of his wide-ranging concerns, this book is extraordinarily difficult to summarize and therefore this review will touch upon only a few of Kirk's major points.

Life without a sense of order is intolerable, like a man traveling through the night without a guide. "The first of the soul's needs," Kirk quotes from Simone Weil's *The Need for Roots*, "the one which touches most nearly its eternal destiny, is order, that is to say, a texture of social relationships in order to carry out other ones..." Consequently, Kirk's idea of order is not the efficient order of an omnipresent police state, but "a systematic and harmonious arrangement," which has grown within the context of inherited wisdom, customs, and traditions.

Kirk's concerns are first and foremost with religious order. A harmonious relationship between the inner order of the soul, the moral order of the individual, and the outer order of the republic, the civil social order, must be established. A civilized social order depends upon a proper religious foundation. With Tocqueville, Kirk holds that America's religious principles are "indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions." Government is only possible "because most people... accept the existence of some moral order, by which they govern their conduct—the order of the soul." So essential is the existence of some sort of a religious grounding for the social order that Kirk would agree with John Adams that even the worship of pagan gods would be preferable to atheism. Within this framework of moral belief and understanding, *The Roots of American Order* selectively studies only those "certain ideas and beliefs, which continue to nurture order in the person and order in the republic down to our time."

The Roots of American Order

by Russell Kirk
Open Court $15.00

Kirk begins his discussion with the Hebrew Prophets, noting their major contribution to modern social order as the understanding that all true law comes from God, Who is the source of order and justice. The Prophets knew that there is a moral order which transcends time, and that to defy that order by separating man from God's order will make man something less than human.

Proceeding next to the contributions of the Greeks, Kirk notes that despite the remoteness of the Greek civilization from our own, "the ideas of Hellas still breathe life" into our understanding of order Solon taught that a balanced mixed form of government which respects the interests and rights of all classes and elements in the commonwealth is the best form Good laws must reconcile the claims of different social groups as the American Founding Fathers wisely understood. Although he did not provide a workable model for the structure of a regime, Plato's analysis of the human condition has been incorporated into the American concepts of order. The ideas of Plato and Aristotle have been transmitted down the ages by the European civilization from which the colonists came.

The Roman civilization, although lacking in Greek imagination and artistic genius, "held more meaning for the new United States than did any other civilization and political community except the British and their own colonial society." The Roman concepts of rule of law and ordered liberty have been imbedded into the American Constitution. Most importantly, the Romans have taught us that true liberty can exist only if the law of state is subordinate to the law of nature "True law is right reason in agreement in Nature," wrote Cicero. "It is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting..." Against the arbitrary and unjust acts of the state, man can appeal to this universal law.

Despite the popular misconception that the Dark Ages of Europe were too intellectually and morally bleak and primitive to have contributed much to the American political order, Kirk contends that an understanding of medieval England and Scotland is essential to an understanding of American order. Its achievement in preserving a decent social and moral order was largely based upon the unique development of common law. This body of non-codified law was the foundation of good order in England—enforceable largely because it reflected the enduring norms of the English people.

Of the eighteenth-century intellect who influenced the Founding Fathers

Kirk selects for special attention Montesquieu and Blackstone. Montesquieu taught, as evidenced throughout the pages of the *Federalist Papers*, the importance of limiting power by functional separation of the branches of government. Blackstone's *Commentaries*, which were so widely read in the colonies before the Revolution, transmitted to the Americans an account of the English law. Natural law, which was rooted in Christian ethics, declared the absolute rights of man, of personal security, personal liberty, and private property.

Kirk's discussion of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution is interesting primarily for its forthright rejection of two widely accepted interpretations often made by many modern thinkers and constitutional experts. First of all, he denies that the phrase "all men are created equal" from the Declaration of Independence implied a kind of egalitarian notion of the talents and abilities of all men. Such a notion would have flown in the face of not only prevailing Christian conviction, but also known biological fact. Rather, the phrase refers to the relative equality of social conditions between the American and British peoples and to the moral equality of men in their ability to discern the principles of a common moral law. Secondly, Kirk resists the notion that the First Amendment to the Federal Constitution erected a kind of "wall of separation" between the Church and the State. The First Amendment was not intended to disavow religious convictions, but to safeguard them from arbitrary regulation by the national government. It left the field of religious establishments to the separate states. Thus, Kirk finds nothing in the Constitution which would be hostile to Christianity nor "the religious consecration of the civil social order."

Kirk's search for American roots may seem to end oddly for many readers. After all, Orestes Brownson, the last thinker that Kirk discusses, a nineteenth-century Catholic social thinker, is not exactly a name that would come readily to a schoolboy's lips if he were asked to think of someone who contributed significantly to the American political tradition. Brownson does, though, serve Kirk's purpose of reaffirming the necessity for a Christian concept of order for America. In his *American Republic*, Brownson argued that religion and politics are forever joined. It is the Church we must depend upon to maintain religious truth and to stand above the oscillations of public opinion. A profoundly religious community would give each man his due, recognizing both the Christian virtue of charity and natural differences which distinguish men from each other. Under God, Brownson concluded, the American Republic will grow in virtue and justice.

These few paragraphs barely outline some of the major themes of this volume. There is much, much more here on medieval Christianity, the Schoolmen, the rise of Protestantism, the Scottish Kirk, the English civil wars, John Locke, Whig politics, American colonial politics, Hume, Burke, and others of whom space forbids any comment. It is certainly Kirk's most ambitious work, second perhaps only to *The Conservative Mind*.

Although Ross J.S. Hoffman, M. Stanton Evans, and others have already proclaimed *The Roots of American Order* as Kirk's "best," to my mind *The Conservative Mind*, to use the late Clinton Rossiter's words, is still his "most enduring contribution to modern conservatism." First, its publication marked a significant turning point in the development and growth of recent American conservative thought, the beginning of the serious effort of conservatives to rediscover and revive a nearly lost tradition. Second, the present book lacks the forceful impact, both stylistically and politically, of *The Conservative Mind*. As a source of inspiration, as well as learning, students will continue turning to *The Conservative Mind*.

However, this book's contribution to conservative literature is unquestionably important. It makes two important contributions to our understanding of the American political tradition. Kirk has performed the highly welcomed task of tracing the origins and development of the major strains of political thought which inspired the framers of the Constitution and which still animate our present moral and political order. Many Americans, during this Bicentennial celebration, will seek to rediscover America's political tradition through such popular books as Alistair Cooke's *America* and Boorstin's *The Americans: The Democratic Experience*. Without a doubt this book would make an admirable addition to the library of any reader eager to understand the intellectual and moral beliefs which underpin the American political system.

Perhaps most important, Kirk's view of the prospects for America is hopeful and optimistic. He has given us much cause to be cheerful as we face the nation's two hundred year birthday. "Americans generally retain a respect for their old moral habits and their old political forms," observes Kirk, "because those habits and forms express their understanding of order. This attachment to certain enduring

(*continued on page 39*)

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The Theory and Practice of Pragmatism

This book shows Hook at his best and his best is very good indeed. People who don't know his career will scarcely believe that for years (in the thirties and forties, for example) educated American youth waited for his point of view on almost all political and social changes before making up their own minds. And Hook's point of view and pungent argument came almost immediately, usually in print, the ideas pouring so fast they seemed to jostle each other. One was for or against him; few were neutral or unconcerned.

Hook had studied with Morris Raphael Cohen at City College in New York, with John Dewey and Frederick J. Woodbridge at Columbia (he wrote his dissertation on the metaphysics of pragmatism under Dewey's supervision), developed a great admiration for Bertrand Russell, and became a foremost Marxist scholar, writing about Marx at first as though he were an intellectual colleague of Dewey's. Out of all this, Hook became a pragmatist, especially in the tradition of Dewey and Charles S. Peirce, calling himself an experimental naturalist for a time and a Pelagian naturalist. The first principle of Hook's pragmatism is not a theory of meaning and truth, which was the origin of pragmatism, but a belief that intelligence helps, "that the logic and ethics of scientific method can and should be applied to human affairs," and that intelligence can yield knowledge about the best ends to seek as well as the best means to attain them. That, of course, was Dewey's belief and Hook has kept the faith.

Although the knowledge of fact, the mastery of ideas, and the dazzling dialectical skill were present in the very young Hook, he has grown in all of these. He also writes much better all the time, both more simply and more eloquently. The years have brought him a greater sense of limitation, and he has learned that a solution is not salvation, that most solutions are only tentative and partial, and that many ways of reducing existent evils produce still greater evils. Yet he clings to Dewey's insight that philosophers should not spend all their time on the problems of philosophy, but concentrate on "the problems of men."

Years ago a very distinguished American philosopher, who was Hook's close friend, told me that if Hook would only stop dealing with particularly human and social problems and deal with large-scale theory, he was the one person of our time who could become another Karl Marx. The best answer to this greatly complimentary complaint is that there already was a Karl Marx, and one was enough. The same thing could be said of Dewey and Hook. Not only was it unnecessary to supersede Dewey, but Hook believed most of what Dewey thought, though always qualifying it here and there. Another matter is that Hook was always a different kind of man, carefully consistent but no system-builder. Neither was Socrates.

In this book, Hook writes, "And although we are seeking to settle conflicts of value by the use of intelligence rather than by force, is it not true that sometimes intelligence requires the use of force?" That is one of the qualifications of Dewey's belief, which was often more extreme than Hook's. At a meeting years ago, Dewey read a paper (which later appeared as a chapter in *Liberalism and Social Action*) in which he distinguished the method of intelligence from the method of force as a way of resolving difficulties, arguing that what was done by force always had enough unfortunate consequences that it had to be redone and that this was not the case with intelligence. Hook asked a typically Hookean question: can there never be an intelligent use of force?

Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life

by Sidney Hook
Basic Books $12.50

Lewis Feuer, writing about Hook in the October 1975 issue of *Encounter*, suggests that Hook still calls himself a pragmatist only because of personal loyalty to Dewey. He adds, "The rationalism of his early teacher, Morris Raphael Cohen, has become dominant in Hook's thought as the Deweyan strain has become recessive." I think Feuer misreads Hook. The pragmatic faith is a little less extreme than it was in Dewey, and although that qualification may be increasing, it has been true for years.

Fortunately for the reader who may think Feuer was right, one of Hook's chapters is "Some Memories of John Dewey." In that he contrasts Cohen's "ambiguous rationalism" with Dewey's (and Peirce's) "experimental naturalism," and says that Cohen had "little original vision." Of Russell, Hook says, "The world is too thick for him and because it has no one pattern he has long since given it up as a higgledy-piggledy mess." What may mislead readers like Feuer, basically sympathetic to Hook, is Hook's confession that, temperamentally, he always found Russell and Cohen more congenial than Dewey. "They are philosophers of the clean line," he says, "incisive, witty, rarely hesitant about sacrificing the dull or exact truth for the sake of a bon mot." He does not add what I suspect was one of their great attractions for him as compared to Dewey: they were intensely combative and almost incredibly quick, like Hook himself. In contrast, Dewey was shambling, very casual, far from brilliant in conversation, and constantly interested in listening to you, not in telling you.

What Hook is one of the few to realize about Dewey is something I learned first from Woodbridge, who told me that Dewey was a great dialectician. And of course he was. Who can ever forget attending a philosophical meeting in which it became unclear what the issue itself was, so many irrelevant words were being said, until Dewey asked *the* question and we all suddenly knew what we should have been saying. And that happened all the time. Further, Hook feels compelled to say, "John Dewey was not a saint," which no one would bother to say about Russell, adding that even when Dewey disliked people he was "fair to a fault." Hook once told me a story about Dewey that I wish he would record somewhere. Awed by Dewey's quiet and constant courage as well as all his other personal qualities, young Hook once asked him if he didn't have any faults. Dewey laughed that of course he did and Hook challenged him to name one. The old philosopher, inveterate worker, busy in a hundred causes and filling a library with his books and articles, answered, sincerely, "I'm lazy."

Unlike Dewey, but like Russell and Cohen, Hook is a fighter and a talker. He is somewhat in the the mold of those men he found congenial, but he does not sacrifice truth to quips. And, like them, he is bold. I remember a meeting at which Russell alone spoke (Dewey was not there), when his answers to questions from the floor were so devastating he clearly frightened all possible opponents. But there were two exceptions, G.E. Moore and Sidney Hook. They would not be silenced, until Russell became so offensive to Moore, who had gone to the blackboard to make a point, that Moore threw down the chalk in his hand, said he had a headache, and walked out. Hook is a warrior of the mind, not, like Dewey, a kind of intellectual saint. He reminds me of Nietzsche's comment, "And if you cannot be saints of knowledge, then, I pray you, be at least its warriors. They are the companions and forerunners of such saintship."

Much can be recommended in this collection of essays, the pragmatic attack on existentialism, the appraisals of Tillich, Popper, and Niebuhr, even more the study of Hegel and liberalism. For Hook, the pragmatist's business is to clarify and so often "debunk" the inflated, the absolute, the pretentious. And Hook debunks as he clarifies. But the very best pages here, like the title essay, have little to

do with debunking and much to do with the great and tragic choices forced on every man. Hook himself is a liberal, although never a party man, never a "ritualistic liberal," as he puts it. He is a meliorist, but a meliorist acutely aware that although there is no substitute for intelligence—surely not pessimism or optimism, nor a faith in any change at all nor a total opposition to all change—intelligence may not be enough. The tragic sense of life does not come because we know we will die. That is something for which we must prepare, not of which we must despair. The tragic sense comes because the nature the moral experience is a conflict of goods, or rights, or of a good with a right. When a choice is clearly between a moral good and a moral evil there is no need for moral inquiry and no genuine moral experience. When there is a conflict of goods or rights, however intelligent our choice is, harm will be done to something that is good or something that is right. This is a tribute to Hegel and the Hegelian elements in Dewey.

By "good" Hook means values and by "right" obligations. The difference is between interests, carefully reflected on, and the demands and laws of the community. We serve the good by avoiding a war but we violate the right if, in order to have peace, we repudiate our treaties. How shall we act if the survival of the group means the abandonment of the innocent? Are there some things we should never do even if the result is more good in the world if we do them? Shall we pay tribute to the minotaur who devours the innocent youth and maidens we give him but leaves the rest of us alone or risk all and fight to a bloody finish, so justice may conceivably triumph? In revolutions we are more likely to sacrifice the right for the presumed good, redefining right as whatever serves the cause. In peace and prosperity, perhaps, we may sacrifice the good to the right, clinging to the communal and established, for they seem to guarantee our welfare best.

Hook has always been good in the use of examples and epigrams which not only illustrate but enlarge his point. He seems to be getting even better, choosing his illustrations from wider types of activity. "Irony," he tells us, "is compounded with tragedy in the fact that many of the rights we presently enjoy we owe to our ancestors, who in the process of winning them for us deprived others of their rights." Or in a different vein, "The Christian and especially the Buddhist ethics of purity, which seek to transcend this conflict and avoid guilt by refusal to violate anyone's right in such situations, can only do so by withdrawing from the plane of the ethical altogether. This may succeed in God's eyes, but not in man's."

When he tells us that we cannot escape the antinomies between the right and the good by defining good as the object of right or the right as the means to the good, he may overstate the case. True, the most inhumane of crimes and the bloodiest agonies of history have resulted from doing what is "right," regardless of consequence. True, also, some conflicts between the two seem insuperable. But, as I have written elsewhere, "Man is not made for morals, but morals for man." The right is sometimes age-old and grows out of religion, piety, superstition, and community. The good is often confused by custom, veneration, habit, and tradition. Much of what we think right came from Hebraism while much what we think good came from Hellenism. Our ideas of both need purification and subtle application. But in the end, it seems to me, we must abandon or purge a moral right that is opposed to the interests, needs, and values of men. We want what serves those, not what destroys them, even it if is called "right." Our perennial moral task is the purification of good and the rationalization of right, so that in our institutional structures right is indeed a means, or at least an aid, to good.

What Hook sees so well are the dangers in such attempts and the highly provisional nature of individual solutions. In his warnings, he is a kind of Jeremiah who predicts our doom if we do not change our ways. But he remains a pragmatic prophet for he does not tell us to change our hearts or to rely only on compassion and love but, as strenuously and carefully as possible, to think. □

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A Refresher Course in Politics

Nelson Polsby is a gentleman and a scholar. He's also an uncommonly good writer. His collection of essays and reviews on American politics, collected in book form under the title *Political Promises*, is both instructive and enjoyable.

I don't always agree with Professor Polsby. When he originally argued that Muskie was the betting favorite in the 1972 Presidential campaign, I thought the calculation was based on some erroneous assumptions. In August 1973, when the *Washington Post* published a pair of articles on the pros and cons of impeachment, we were the authors on opposite sides.

But you don't have to agree with someone all the time to respect him; we learn most not from those whose views echo ours, but from people who can explain why our own assumptions are sometimes wrong. Precisely because many educated Americans will disagree with Polsby, *Political Promises* should be widely—and sympathetically—read.

It's not that Polsby has a radical reinterpretation to offer. Quite the contrary, he is a careful and down-to-earth observer of the way things are. And at a moment of American history when high-flown ideals and rhetoric have given way to general cynicism, perhaps Polsby's sober reflections are a healthy antidote to the mood swings generated by the mass media.

The first essay in this book, written well before Nixon's resignation, places the Watergate crisis in its historical perspective—and in so doing, reminds us that the so-called trial by the media was far less significant than we have been led to believe. By comparing Nixon's dismissal of Cox with Truman's dismissal of MacArthur, Polsby emphasizes the peculiar stance of the Nixon Presidency, its isolation from the Washington political elite, and its rejection of the prevailing American constitutional tradition of checks and balances. As he showed even before the resignation, therefore, it was in Nixon's first term—long before the cover-up—that the fundamental errors were made.

Some of Polsby's papers deal with national politics. He has the honesty to republish predictions that went wildly astray—notably those made early in the 1972 campaign. On rereading them with hindsight, however, the reasons for Polsby's overestimation of Muskie and his belief that Nixon might lose, are more understandable; unlike most intellectuals, Polsby is in close touch with those in Congress and the federal bureaucracy who make the system work from day to day.

Both Nixon and McGovern sought to short-circuit much of this system (though for opposed reasons). As a result, McGovern's string of primary victories—in part due to Muskie's bad strategy, which failed to take Polsby's advice for an early declaration of candidacy—permitted a relative outsider to dominate the Democratic convention and to campaign through the media rather than through the traditional pattern of party and interest-group influentials. And since Polsby's early prediction in 1972 rested on his understanding that a majority of political elites and party regulars preferred a middle-of-the-road Democrat to Nixon, his mistake was an overestimation of the importance of the traditional forces in American politics—and not a misunderstanding of the attitudes of the politicians he knows so well.

Political Promises

by Nelson Polsby
Oxford University Press
$9.95

In other words, the very familiarity with the working of the American system —which makes Polsby so generally informative and enlightening—had its drawbacks in his early predictions of the 1972 campaign. When it comes to the essays that focus on Congress, however, these strengths make Polsby's analysis invaluable.

Few outsiders to the world of Capitol Hill can hope to approach Polsby's familiarity with the men, the tone, and the concerns of the American Congress, particularly the House of Representatives. In a day when journalists and the public at large have been mesmerized by Presidential politics, Polsby has taken the infinite pains to study and understand the complex ways in which our legislators actually function.

One essay in particular stands out in this book. Given the fact that Carl Albert, as Speaker of the House, has been "one heart-beat from the Presidency" during the two Vice-Presidential vacancies since 1972, the story of his election as Democratic Majority Leader in 1962 is not simply a trivial anecdote: the pattern which led to Albert's victory over Richard Bolling in the contest for the Majority Leadership (a position which normally leads to the Speakership) explains much about the way powerful figures in Congress become—and stay—powerful.

Bolling was the favorite of the majority of journalists (some of whom openly endorsed him); he was the "liberal" candidate to replace his close friend Sam Rayburn, who died in November 1961. Albert had been Majority Whip—responsible for informing the leadership on exactly how Democratic Congressmen would vote; as such, Albert was in close touch with most of his colleagues, and widely admired as a person. In short, Carl Albert was, in the Democratic Party, the exact equivalent of Gerald Ford in the House GOP during Nixon's Presidency. The conflict between Bolling and Albert in 1962 was therefore a typical conflict between what Polsby calls "inside" and "outside" strategies for gaining influence in Congress. Bolling tried to generate a media campaign, and to pressure Democratic Congressmen through their home constituencies. Albert used his extensive network of personal contacts, notably through a direct campaign of personally wiring and telephoning the membership of the House.

Polsby's study of the process is far more significant than many other, more visible events in American politics. It is not primarily a question of knowing why Albert won easily (Bolling dropped out of the contest when it became evident that he couldn't win). Rather, this apparently minor event underlines the fundamental conflict between two arenas in contemporary American politics: the Washington political elite, with its caution, its traditions, and its highly personalized atmosphere; the national media, the "grass roots" feelings, and the public opinion polls.

That Nixon was forced from office after having virtually declared war on *both* arenas is thus probably less significant, as a long range fact of American politics, than the tension between them. And that Nixon's successor comes from the "club" known as the House of Representatives, rather than from the ranks of those whose primary political base is national prestige, reflects the impossibility of maintaining a political system in complete defiance of those who dominate the "inside" life of Washington.

Polsby obviously respects the "insiders" and the skills which permit them to survive and govern. He will therefore come across as conservative—if not reactionary—to those who have felt that ideals have too little influence on our policy, and that our system has been too slow in responding to the crises of the 1960s and 1970s. Before dismissing him with such a label, however, we would do well at least to listen to what he has to say, if only because it is necessary to be reminded from time to time that we can't always have our own way in politics. Or, as the saying goes, "politics ain't beanbag."

For example, Polsby's discussion of extremism in recent American politics has the refreshing merit of comparing the McCarthyism of the 1950s with the SDS activism of the following decade. In both cases—as more recently with the excesses of Nixon staffers—considerable

numbers of Americans thought that the checks and balances of our political system sheltered intolerable people and produced illegitimate public policies. While that may well be, Polsby quietly reminds us that the people and public policies so condemned—imperfect though they are—may be far preferable to the alternatives.

Polsby's perspective is, of course, not the only one that deserves consideration. It may be that, faced with intractable economic crisis, ecological disaster, and foreign chaos, the traditional institutions of the American regime are incapable of responding fast enough and decisively enough. But before coming to such a revolutionary conclusion—which would surely lead to a form of monarchy (as has so often occurred in earlier republics, such as the Rome of antiquity or Renaissance Florence)—we would do well to ponder the arguments in favor of our own traditions.

In particular, given the wave of cynicism now abroad in the land, Polsby's assessment of Watergate—though written before Nixon's resignation—deserves to be quoted:

"Legitimacy in our system proceeds not from electoral mandates alone, but also from the mutual accountability of political leaders. The political process in America occurs not once every four years but continuously. That is one valuable lesson of Watergate.

"Persons who value the proper working of American political institutions, and who see in their proper working a marvelous instrument of democratic self-government, are bound to view the unfolding events of Watergate with repugnance. For it is precisely because we Americans are so numerous, so diverse, and so liable to disagree that we must nurture with particular care a government whose leaders are subservient to law, hedged by custom, protected from arbitrary and impulsive acts by inner restraints and by institutionalized rules. That is the public trust that has evidently been so abused and which must be restored."

It is conceivable that this "public trust" cannot be restored—and that in place of delicate institutions Polsby describes so well, we may see the emergence of a plebiscitary style based on mass manipulation in coming years. But given the abuses of such a transformation of our system, informed Americans would do well to read—and think carefully—about the strength of "inner restraints and institutionalized rules" that have dominated what Polsby calls the "Washington subculture."

If we're to understand the daily "news" heaped on us by the media, a refresher course in American politics is probably in order. As a start I'd recommend that, instead of next Sunday's *New York Times*, you read Nelson Polsby's *Political Promises*. □

The Public Policy

by Adam Meyerson

Trading with the Enemy

For all its antipathy to capitalism, the Soviet regime has shown remarkable skill recently in trading on capitalist markets. Indeed, to anyone who has observed Soviet shrewdness in buying American grain futures or in playing foreign investors off against each other it might seem that the Communists are better capitalists than the capitalists. This success is probably more a function of national character than of ideology; for many centuries, Russia's closest commercial and cultural ties were to Levantine and Central Asian peoples—peoples more adept in trading goods than in manufacturing them—and that uncanny Russian knack for negotiating the best possible deal reminds one of Bedouin traders at Arab bazaars. (It is ironic in this connection that the Russian word for comrade, *tovarishch*, comes from the Turko-Tatar word for merchandise, and originally meant business or trading partner.) And yet, there is also an ideological purpose in the Soviet eagerness for and facility with Western trade. It was Lenin who supplied that famous observation—that the bourgeoisie would sell the rope with which the Bolsheviks would hang them.

For this reason, now that American agribusiness is again selling grain to the Soviet Union, now that Occidental Petroleum is constructing a long ammonia pipeline through the Ukraine and other American firms are scrambling for similar contracts, there is a widespread fear—at least among those of us who still loathe totalitarian Communism—that by trading with the Soviets we are strengthening their regime and playing into their hands. George Meany has observed that by providing the Soviets with grain and technology we allow them to overcome the "disastrous consequences of totalitarian planning"; we thereby rescue Communism, he suggests, from the internal seeds of its own destruction. Our honorary countryman Alexander Solzhenitsyn declared in his moving address before the AFL-CIO that "The whole existence of [Soviet] slave owners from beginning to end has depended on Western economic assistance." Solzhenitsyn opposes all trade with the Soviet Union: even if we supply goods and capital only for feeding, clothing, and housing the Soviet people, he contends, we strengthen totalitarian control and threaten our own freedom by freeing Soviet resources for the military and the police.

There is considerable justification for these warnings and arguments. By selling grain to the Soviet Union we do permit the Politburo to escape admitting responsibility for shortages that result from an accumulation of disastrous economic policies (this year's grain shortfall of more than thirty percent is attributable as much to unpredicted bad weather as to bad policies; even so, a good plan is supposed to be able to take uncertainties into account); we thus help relieve the regime of angry consumer demands. By selling the Soviets machine tools for their new Kama River truck factory, we do bolster their transportation system, hence their economy, and hence their military preparedness. By buying palladium and other rare metals from the Soviets, we do provide them with the hard currency to buy from other countries products which we might consider too dangerous to sell on our own to an enemy.

Moreover, there is a strong moral argument against trading with the Soviets, just as there is a strong (though different) moral argument against trading with Rhodesia and South Africa. If you regard a regime as incorrigibly wicked, then to trade with it is to nourish its wickedness. This is the essence of Solzhenitsyn's plea—that we do not, for the sake of a few dollars, sell our soul to the devil. →

Much as I respect these warnings and the moral force of these arguments, I nevertheless think that there is a strong case to be made for nonmilitary trade with the Soviet Union, or at least against restricting such trade. I say this despite my chariness of much of what passes for "detente"—in our SALT talks, in our failure to challenge Soviet behavior in Vietnam and the Middle East, and elsewhere, we have been making unilateral political and military concessions which may have fearful consequences. But trade is not a unilateral concession: it may be advantageous to the Soviet Union, but—provided it is not financed by American government subsidies, as in the preposterous 1972 grain sales—it is just as advantageous to the United States.

American grain sales to the Soviet Union were temporarily halted last summer because of a fear of an inflationary effect on domestic food prices, because U.S. maritime unions wanted to exercise monopoly power over grain transport, and because there was a widespread feeling that the Soviets ought to be giving us something in return for our wheat and corn. In a later article on food prices, I shall try to show that the inflationary impact of such sales is modest and only short-term. But as for the last concern, the *Wall Street Journal* has aptly observed of our grain sales that we do indeed get something in return: "a transfer of wealth from the Soviet Union." The Russians pay us money, money that strengthens our balance of payments, money with which we can buy oil from the Arabs, or coffee from the Brazilians, or whatever we want from whomever we want at whatever is the best price. The transfer of wealth was smaller when, as until 1974, the U.S. Export-Import Bank helped the Soviets pay for their imports by extending low credit terms of six to seven percent, and when the U.S. Department of Agriculture paid for $160 million of the Soviets' 1972 grain purchases; in the last year, however, the Soviets have had to pay market prices and borrow at market rates.

Furthermore, East-West trade, though clearly advantageous to the Soviet Union, is not so advantageous as some of its critics suggest. The Soviet economy is bedeviled by the inefficiencies and poor incentives characteristic of centralized planning; just as the enormous American aid and sales of grain to India have not made her capable of feeding herself, so sales of bulldozers and corn to the Soviet Union will not alleviate structural problems like the inefficient use of labor (the Soviet economy is afflicted at once by extensive underemployment and by a serious labor shortage). On the other hand, the Soviet economy is strong enough to function adequately without Western trade; the Soviets certainly have all the natural resources they need, and they have been remarkably efficient in those sectors of the economy which they have considered most important (e.g., electrification, aerospace, nuclear weapponry), in part because they have allowed market-like incentives to operate there. If IBM were not selling the Soviet Union 370/158 computers, and if the Commissars considered them essential either for economic or for military purposes, the Soviets would find a way to make them on their own—perhaps a few years late, perhaps not quite as well-made, but they would have them all the same.

The recent agreement which ended the moratorium on grain sales is an indication of how the Soviets can do without our trade. For all our talk of getting something in return (besides money) for our grain, it was *we* who pressed hastily for a conclusion to the agreement. We wanted to buy oil from the Soviets at a price lower than OPEC's, but under strong political pressure from farm states clamoring for sales to resume, we settled for an agreement which makes no mention of oil except for a "letter of intent" no one intends to uphold. The Soviets, who worry less about such pressures, were in no hurry to end the moratorium, even though their grain shortfall has been so serious as to provoke widespread "distress" slaughtering of livestock. Similarly, it was the Soviets who canceled the agreement tying most-favored-nation status in America to permission for Soviet Jews to emigrate. The benefits of greater export opportunities were apparently not worth the price of American interference in Soviet internal affairs. One would not expect the Soviets to be so jealous of their prerogatives if our trade were crucial to their economy or to the maintenance of their regime's control.

One reason, of course, that the Soviets can do without American trade is that plenty of other Western countries are eager to buy or sell when we are unwilling. Indeed, American exporters have discovered that they are often at a competitive disadvantage when they try to sell their wares to the Soviets, for the Export-Import Banks of France, Japan, and other countries extend them generous terms of credit, while ours does so no longer. (This by no means implies that we should give such terms of credit, just as large subsidies for foreign competitors hardly justify subsidies to our own international airlines.) In 1974, a year of low grain purchases for the Soviets, the United States was only their seventh largest Western trading partner, following West Germany, Japan, Finland, Italy, France, and Great Britain. We played a more prominent role in 1975, as a result of our grain exports, but even though the United States accounts for 75% of all world grain exports, the Soviets do not seem to have had much trouble finding other grain suppliers during our moratorium; there was certainly no rush to sign American contracts when the moratorium ended. If trade with the Soviet Union is evil, then we should not engage in it, but given other available export and import markets we should not imagine that we are denying the Soviets much by denying them our trade.

Of course, we should not suppose that we are gaining enormously from Soviet trade either. We have far more important trading partners, except for a few rare metals there is little we could not get elsewhere, and except for our agricultural sector our gains from exports to the Soviet Union are only marginal. Soviet trade represents only 5% of West Germany's foreign trade, and the West Germans are the Soviets' biggest trading partner in the West. (Bonn, however, is having much more success in its trade with Eastern Europe.) Nor are trading opportunities likely to expand as significantly in the future as some Western businessmen anticipate. The CIA estimates that the Soviets will be importing an average of $31 billion of goods yearly from 1980 to 1985, and that includes imports from their Eastern European satellites (which still account for two-thirds of Soviet trade). For purposes of comparison it is interesting to note that in 1973 $22 billion worth of goods were imported by Belgium and Luxembourg.

Marginal gains, nevertheless, are gains all the same; indeed, it is by marginal calculations that the success of commercial propositions is judged. By trading with the Soviets when it is marginally beneficial to do so (as opposed, say, to trading with the Italians, or the Japanese, or our own countrymen), our enterprises and our economy become correspondingly stronger and better equipped to serve both domestic and foreign preferences. One of the advantages of our economic system over the Soviets' is not only that our enterprises can determine marginal costs and benefits more precisely, but also that they are freer to follow the logic of their calculations.

And this brings me to the major reason why I favor Soviet trade, or at least why I oppose placing obstacles on it. For the last generation, the countries of the world—both industrial and developing—have benefited from a respect for, if not a complete adherence to, the principles of free trade between nations. These are the principles of friendship—in an imperfect world marred by bitter national animosities, they suggest that there are some concerns in which one country's gain is not necessarily its neighbor's loss. They are the principles of prosperity—for they encourage not only the efficient allocation of world resources but also a mutual appreciation by nations of each other's riches. Although they have sometimes been a screen for exploitation, they are the principles of freedom. But now, whatever semblance of free trade existed is giving way before the "new international order"—an order based on nationalistic envy, spite, and greed; an order in which exchange reverts to extortion and expropriation. It is a sign of these times that Britain, once the beacon of international liberalism, now yearns to join the oil cartel. In such times it is left to the United States to bear a faltering but noble standard.

The United States and the Soviet Union

are divided bitterly—not only by ideological differences but by political and military conflicts that would probably be inevitable between whatever nations were the world's two greatest powers. In such political and military conflicts, the Soviets and the Americans can gain only at each other's expense. If the Soviets develop a new attack missile, that is a threat to our security. If the Soviets gain influence in Angola, that is a diminution of our own influence. But the world of commerce and production does not play what the game theorists call a zero-sum game; if exchange is free, it can take place only when it is to the advantage of both parties to engage in it. The United States is one of the few countries in the history of the world which has been committed, however imperfectly, to the freedom of exchange and to the principles of friendship and prosperity which spring from that freedom. We have embraced these principles more often on a domestic than on an international scale, but if we are to win our ideological battle with the Soviet Union—which represents the very antithesis of these principles as of almost all our principles—we must strengthen our international efforts. There is a very real sense, then, in which we would be playing into Soviet hands not by trading with them but by restricting their trade. □

The Bootblack Stand

by George Washington Plunkitt

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

Political conditions continue to worsen in Portugal. Why this should be the case remains a mystery to old Portuguese hands. Our Portuguese operative Admiral Francisco da Gama, ret., reports that there exists a political resolution eminently desirable to the vast majority of Portuguese and that it could be put into effect overnight with but a gesture of support from Washington. According to da Gama, 78-year-old Dom Fernando Oliveira Da Costa Eçeveron, the half-brother of the present pretender to the Portuguese throne and the man who was actually groomed for that job, is willing and able to return to Lisbon from Honolulu if someone could only be found to pay his airfare. From Honolulu Eçeveron has kept a sharp eye on Portuguese politics for the past 65 years, and da Gama claims that the avowedly pro-Western prince feels that there is no reason Portugal cannot be returned to the same stability that characterizes Spain or even Monaco. What do you say to the idea that we send him airfare and let the chips fall where they may?

By the way this letter is timed to self-destruct thirty seconds after you have read it. *Duck!*

—William Colby
Acting Director, CIA

My Dear Colby:

The trouble with these European aristocrats is that their peculiar working habits leave them open to easy assassination, and as you are aware assassination is an increasingly popular form of diplomacy. For instance it would be kid stuff to slip one of the old boys a loaded backgammon stone or to swamp his yacht. In the case of your Eçeveron, a foreign operative could easily secrete a bomb in his skateboard. To my lights your plan is full of peril. I suggest you get the Gambino family's judgment.

Incidentally, your letter failed to self-destruct, though it did smell awful for a few days.

—GWP

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

Wouldn't you have thought that the Nixonian menace to our liberties was finally over? But now it seems that I am to be the victim of a muckraking campaign directed by one of the most vicious relicts of the Nixon years, one William Safire. In the November 20th edition of the *New York Times* that man attempted to cast doubt on the integrity of my Senate Select Committee on Intelligence by claiming partisan political interests have caused me to neglect several instances of domestic skulduggery during the illustrious administrations of President Johnson and President Kennedy.

Specifically this Safire claims that we have not looked into the identity of the attorney general who in 1963 authorized a program of wiretapping against Martin Luther King, which ended in attempted blackmail. He also charges that my committee glossed over evidence that the 1964 Republican convention was bugged by the FBI under orders from the late Mr. Johnson. Further he charges that we have not delved deeply enough into revelations that the management of NBC News gave press credentials to the late Mr. Johnson's spies at the 1964 convention.

Now what galls me is that this Safire is not talking about dangers to civil liberties but about the deceased. He wants us to desecrate the graves of patriots and Democrats. He wants us to investigate men who aren't even alive to defend themselves. What I want to know, Dr. Plunkitt, is how I can give it to this rat good and hard.

Remember me to your mother.

—Cordially,
Senator Frank Church, LL.B.

Dear Senator Church:

My mother died 26 years ago, and I wish I could say the same for you. You closet candidates have become a dreadful nuisance. I long for the good old days when jackasses like you ran for the Presidency by promising to rid the country of demon rum and the foreign element, instead of promising to rid the country of its intelligence agencies. Why don't you extend your investigations to cover the doings of the KGB?

With respect to your question, there of course remain ways to take care of Safire. You can't at this time rely on the old schemes that were so useful in the early sixties. You can't send the IRS after him. You can't bug him. And he's not a steel mogul, so we can't harass him with agents in the night. No, it seems that for the present the best way to put the screws to an enemy is to call him before your committee. Make him hire a lawyer, spend large amounts of time recalling the minutiae of his life. Make him sit before abusive interrogators, endure questions that could never be put to him in a court of law, and then have his reputation thoroughly blackened by leaks to unfriendly newspapermen. Go to it, Senator Church.

—GWP

EDITORIAL
(continued from page 4)

manifest that he does not do it for the sake of historical accuracy.

Subsequent to the publication of *Breach of Faith* various government investigations have revealed not only that the intelligence chiefs have been free of the duress of Huston but that they have been tolerably free of the influence of several Presidents. According to figures made public by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on September 25, the Federal Bureau of Investigation committed at least 238 surreptitious entries from 1942 to 1968. On September 24 former CIA counterintelligence chief James Angleton testified that his agency had illegally intercepted all mail to and from the Soviet Union from 1952 until 1973. The penetration of groups adjudged subversive is old hat; according to disclosures by the Senate Committee on November 5, international cable traffic was monitored by the National Security Agency from 1947 to May of 1975 without the knowledge of any President since Harry Truman. Just who dominated whom at those meetings between Huston and the panjandrums of the intelligence community is subject to Holmesian speculation, but it is clear by now that Huston, White's "menace to the republic," did not. It is just as clear that the Huston Plan is no more a causal antecedent to Watergate and the plumbers than *Breach of Faith* is a causal prelude to the Presidential candidacy of Linda Lovelace.

Because White's blowzy analysis of Huston and his plan is pivotal to White's analysis of Watergate and the coverup, it is the most crucial of his misstatements—it is not his last. In fact, viewed with respect to historical accuracy, *Breach of Faith* can be read as a sustained insult to the Organization of American Historians. His knowledge of the Founding Fathers is memorable. As White sees them, James Madison and his associates were indistinguishable from an assemblage of Rexford G. Tugwells. According to the author: (1) "What he [RMN] did not understand was the past—or the reasons why Americans so long ago had originally put so much potential power in the office he held.... he had broken with the faith that had glued Americans to each other in the beginning to make a republic." (2) "Of all the political myths out of which the republic was born... none was more hopeful than the crowning myth of the presidency—that the people, in their shared wisdom, would be able to choose the best man to lead them." (3) "...the presidency the supreme office, would make noble any man who held its responsibility." Such balderdash is characteristic. At one point he erases from the record practically every Presidential Administration since the late Mr. McKinley's by declaring, "Richard Nixon and his men were, for the first time in American politics since 1860, carrying on an ideological war." At another point he speaks of America's ethnic diversity in such exaggerated terms as to leave the impression that the United States is at one with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. *Breach of Faith* is historical revisionism at its most preposterous.

Yet whereas some revisionists twist the record because of their ideology or because their wives laugh at them for lingering at the bottom of the academic ladder, White revises the record because to him the record does not matter. What matters is sheer noisiness, noisiness to lure from their tvs and radios those wretches who need stupendous jolts of excitement to make life worth living. Thanks to White's amazing gusto for the art of the Methodist ranter, he has succeeded in his quest. He has written a book whose gasconade and bombast could waken the dead. It is a glory: "Middle America had been without a great leader for generations, and in Richard Nixon it had elevated a man of talent and ability, a President so powerful as to change the world, so powerful that Richard Nixon alone had been able to destroy Richard Nixon.... The Nixon disaster has ushered in the new 94th Congress—overwhelmingly Democratic, refreshingly vigorous, more determined than any Congress since 1866 to curb Presidential authority.... The Congress has astounded and delighted all observers by its first efforts to make the Congress responsible to the changing needs of a new generation of Americans...." Ah, yes, what a magnificent Congress, and what a magnificent book. It is the worst book of the year—a masterpiece of the disc jockey's art! Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you the 1975 winner of the Harold Robbins Award, Theodore H. White. □

David Brudnoy

Brudnoy's Film Index

■ **Black Christmas:** Retitled from *Silent Night, Evil Night*, under which name it bombed, this gripping chiller plays with a brutal fellow going 'round killing young ladies and their sorority house mother. It's spooky as all get out. For once in this age of ripoffs of the old horror flicks, a winner. Lots of chills, eerie performances by Keir Dullea as an easily rattled pianist, Olivia Hussey as his girl friend, and enough terror to make Hitchcock's *Psycho* seem like *Bambi*.

■ **Le Chat:** Jean Gabin and Simone Signoret make as much as possible of Georges Simenon's depressing tale of the married couple communicating by note, she having killed his cat, he having decided to punish her thereafter with eternal silence. The performances, although splendid, cannot rescue the "plot," such as it is, from unremitting boredom.

■ **Conduct Unbecoming:** Veddy British, veddy stiff, veddy bloody dull: Ind-jah late in the last century, and an "incident" in the regiment precipitates a kangaroo court trial of the accused and rather diffident officer. Enough stiff upper lips to revive the Empire, but also enough bargain-basement Freud to bring back mother love. Michael York carries on nobly as the defending attorney, James Faulkner has very dreamy eyes as the accused, and Susannah York flashes her teeth quite a bit as the aggrieved Mrs. Scarlett—and no Butterfly McQueen for miles.

■ **Diamonds:** Shelley Winters has all the best lines, playing an American Jewish widow tromping around Israel, but she is wholly incidental to the story, which has to do with a Britisher (Robert Shaw), his Negro accomplice (Richard Roundtree), and the Diamond Exchange in Tel Aviv. Can you guess that the gentlemen have grand theft on their minds, that Shelley waddles in and out at soft moments, and that you've seen the robbery before, in *Topkapi* and about nine other flicks? Bravo!

■ **Let's Do It Again:** The inevitable sequel to last year's *Uptown Saturday Night*, which, like the original, is light and frothy, jivey good time, fluffy but sprightly. Bill Cosby and Sidney Poitier once again in dutch with the hoods. Something about fixing boxing matches. Nothing much matters, but the spirit's willing and the flesh is understandably weak for this sort of spoof.

■ **Lies My Father Told Me:** Cross Dudd Kravitz with *Fiddler*'s Tevye, situate the story in Canada, find yourself the cutest little Jewish kid on the block, give him a wise but cranky grandpa, a weepy momma, a bumpkin papa, a neighborhood whore with heart of unkosher sandwich spread, a gossipy yenta, the villag

(*continued on page 39*)

"Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." —Euripides

Current Wisdom

KULTUR NOTES: Another thoughtful *aperçu* into the highbrow world of the Hollywoodians:

HOLLYWOOD—Barbara Hershey, the tender, sweet-faced actress who changed her name to Seagull and lived for seven years with David Carradine, has resurrected herself and her career by dropping both.

At 27, Barbara has returned to the mainstream, wiser, more beautiful, and with a 3-year-old son, *Free*....

The transformation in Barbara is electric. She has lost weight. The Earth Mother spell has evaporated. No longer does she wear tattered denims and raggedy blouses. She is possessed of a newfound serenity.

The old image lingers, however, in the minds of producers and casting directors, many of whom don't even want to interview the former Barbara Seagull.

"All of that is behind me now," she said softly.

"I took the name Seagull after a very personal and profound experience. And I destroyed it by telling the story so many times it lost its meaning for me.

"David and I were like children about our lifestyle. We sounded as if we were preaching.

"We gave the impression we weren't serious about our acting. It attracted attention but not the kind I wanted. I want to attract attention as an actress."

—*Chicago Tribune*
November 10, 1975

THE LIFE OF THE MIND: What follows is an excerpt from a review of a book by a Mr. George Brown. We publish it in the public interest, and in the hope that someone somewhere is listening:

George Brown has been a seminal force in helping teachers develop educational methods that promote students' personal growth. His new book deserves attention both for its practical value and as a reflection of the larger field of humanistic education. The strengths of the book are the strengths of the field. Its limitations define potential directions for the field.

This book was organized for practitioners who want to bring "more life and better learning into classrooms [by] putting feeling and thinking together in the learning process." When this occurs, students experience *confluence*—release of emotional energy, excitement, and a sense of significance combined with increased mental functioning. The most vivid examples of confluent processes are dialogues of events in the classroom. Here is a portion of one high school interchange:

"*Bev:* Karen, do you see any relationship between the professor and the student in the [Ionesco] play and the classrooms of today?

"*Karen:* Not really.

"*B:* Okay, at the end of the play Ionesco refers to the professor as the murderer and the student as the victim. Does that say anything to you?

"*K:* I guess he's calling teachers murderers and students victims.

"*B:* How are teachers murderers and students victims?

"*K:* (long pause) I don't know.

"*B:* Okay, let's talk for a moment about stripping someone of his humanity, which is a kind of murder. Karen, what makes a person be a person and not some sort of robot?

"*K:* Creativity, thinking, individualism, questioning.

"*B:* Let's write them on the board. I'm going to play a game with you for a moment. I want you to react in any way you'd like—angry, complying, happy, bored, or whatever. Don't worry about what you say. I won't tell.

"*K:* (laughing) Okay.

"*B:* Karen, scratch your knee!

"*K:* No.

"*B:* Yes.

"*K:* I don't want to.

"*B:* Do it.

"*K:* (progressively louder and more agitated) No!

"*B:* I said to scratch your knee. Do what I say.

"*K:* I don't have to do what you say.

"*B:* Scratch your knee!

"*K:* Why?

"*B:* Doesn't matter, just do it.

"*K:* No.

"*B:* (stopping the activity) How do you feel?

"*K:* Like I'm not gonna move.

"*B:* Yeah! I felt we were really separated, no contact. How'd you feel about me?

"*K:* Like you were trying to control me.

"*B:* Yeah, and you resisted me.

"*K:* I thought your demands were stupid.

"*B:* (laughing) So did I.

"(Now I point to the board again, to Karen's words.)

"*B:* See any connection between your observations here and what just happened between you and me?

"*K:* (coming alive) Yes, you were denying all of those things in me and I was refusing to meet you.

"*B:* You see how the professor does the same to the student?

"*K:* Yes, dehumanizes her." (pp. 214, 215)

—*Phi Delta Kappan*
November 1975

MEDIA BIAS: Cultural depravity seeps into the editorial page of the once discriminating *Baltimore Sun*:

The Alternative.... is one of the liveliest, best written, best edited journals of ideas and politics we know.

—*Baltimore Sun*
November 4, 1975

THE NEW VOLUNTARISM: In this glorious new era of candor and authenticity the incomparable *Times* of New York reports on the new spirit of voluntarism burning through our court-ordered democracy:

RICHARDSON, Tex., Aug. 9—While parents of Dallas school children agonize over court-ordered desegregation, parents in this suburb north of Dallas have voluntarily agreed to send 300 of their children to a previously all-black elementary school in order to achieve integration.

The voluntary program, called "Pacesetter," was begun by the Richardson Independent School District after Judge William M. Taylor, Jr. of the Federal District Court ruled last month that Richardson's all-black Hamilton Park Elementary School must be desegregated or he would design desegregation plans that might include forced busing.

—*New York Times*
August 10, 1975

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR DEPT.: Mr. Julian Bond, famed merchant of brotherhood, remarks on the afflictions of a cripple:

If George Wallace had lost his speech instead of the use of his legs, he would have committed suicide.

—To an interviewer from
United Features Syndicate

FEMINIST DIALECTICS: Luscious food for thought, served up by a leading feminist philosophe:

Rape in its primary meaning permeates our lives. Wars between tribes and nations, clashes of ignorant armies, arise and fall away. But the guerrilla war of men against women, suppressed or transformed though it may be in civilization and polite society, never ends.... rape is the hidden foundation for too much of our social order, the cardinal act of defilement by which men assert possession and control over the other half of humanity.

—*New York Times Book Review*
October 12, 1975

DRIVEL: In responding to the asinine query "What should be done to solve New York City's dilemma?" Lewis Mumford heads for the empyrian:

Make the patient as comfortable as possible; it's too late to operate. Stop spending money for the wrong things, and that means stop spending money for genocidal war and nuclear warfare. It's a drain on the national economy, and the state of our cities is a result of the way we've spent our national income.

—*New York Times*
July 30, 1975

correspondence

To the Editor:

Neither the various articles nor editorial comments in **The Alternative** on foreign policy offer any creative alternative to the sterility of liberalism's postwar containment which has brought us disasters in Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Eastern Europe, and China, and increasing threats to Israel and Portugal. On the contrary, **The Alternative** honors containment by repeatedly featuring liberals such as Eugene Rostow and Ben Wattenberg who have *nothing better to offer than endless American* involvement in foreign wars, hoping, as Lyndon Baines Johnson did, that the Communists will tire out before conquering still another piece of territory.

To suggest, as does Stanley Stillman, that it is a failure of American will that binds the hands of President Ford and his Rockefeller satrap Henry Kissinger is nonsense. The American people supported the war in Vietnam until long after it became obvious that neither Johnson nor Nixon nor Ford, all influenced by liberal advisors, intended to win. It should be remembered that the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed both houses of Congress with only two dissenting votes. Those two gentlemen were turned out at the next election.

To pick up Stillman's theme, the truth is that Kissinger and Ford are attempting to lead, not follow, American will in their general global retreat. Who demands that the White House give away the Panama Canal to a banana-republic Marxist dictator? What public clamor was there for Ford to sign the Helsinki agreement legitimizing the Soviet rape of Eastern Europe? Who applauded when Ford, at Kissinger's urging, rudely snubbed the greatest living author and courageous dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn? Who demanded that Ford offer to revitalize the Egyptian army which repeatedly seeks to decimate Israel and underwrites guerrilla wars against Western friends within the Arab bloc? Who urges that Ford undercut Nationalist China in his kow-tows to the Chinese Communists? Who calls for the State Department, under Kissinger's orders, to cover up the Soviet brutalization of American diplomats in Moscow? Certainly the American public does none of these things, which are the outgrowth of the defeatism of containment.

Liberal containment ensures Western defeat primarily because it allows all of the initiative to the enemy. The Communists can—and do—carefully pick and choose the most vulnerable Western targets to assault; at best the United States reacts with a holding policy. Hanoi did not win in Southeast Asia; Washington simply gave up after it was obvious that containment offered no prospect for peace with honor, i.e. for assured national independence for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

It was containment that compelled American GIs to hold fire until fired upon, to provide the Communists with innumerable sanctuaries to which they could retreat when threatened with tactical defeats. It was containment which led to the policy of trying to buy peace through the subsidization of Communist aggression with American military technology.

What is a constructive alternative to the straw of containment to which **The Alternative** clings? It is simply to go on the offensive, to encourage and support wars of national liberation behind the Iron Curtain, to support the pleas of dissidents who beg the United States not to strengthen the totalitarian grip of the Communists on their own peoples. If the Communists have to spend all of their time putting out brush fires within their sphere, they will have little time and energy left to subvert the West.

Obviously a policy of liberating the Communist slaves would be risky, but so is containment with its built-in tendency toward neo-isolationism and inevitable defeat. At least liberation offers the prospect of victory for Western Civilization.

Wellington J. Griffith III
Sun City, Arizona

To the Editor:

Recently I saw a photograph of you speaking while the Secretary of the Treasury was either laughing or sneezing. I've studied the photograph carefully and I now believe Mr. Simon was sneezing. The deciding factor was the shape of your mouth. You seem to be forming a "Ggg" sound, which I interpret as the beginning of a "God bless you." That, anyway, is my theory.

I hope you're very happy together.

Lawrence J. Siskind
Cambridge, Massachusetts

To the Editor:

From you excellent November issue, I would single out Max Geltman's "What's Left in Portugal" for special praise. As few other commentators have, Mr. Geltman correctly analyzed the essence of the conflict and delineated the intricate and well-coordinated Communist maneuvering which political imbeciles in the West have misinterpreted as their defeat.

One of the most enigmatic and sinister figures in the Portuguese tragedy is the leader of the Socialist Party, Dr. Mario Soares. He has been represented as everything other than what he really is, a Communist Trojan Horse since the outbreak of the present turmoil. By offering the unique "moderate left alternative" during the Goncalves crisis and keeping his huge following practically immobile and without political direction when the psychological moment for decisive action to save the country was best, Soares defused the situation for the Communists and gave them the present breather to consolidate their strength.

Beyond the claims that he is a democrat and sworn enemy of totalitarianism—epithets derived entirely from the fantasy world of Western journalists—relatively little is known directly of Soares' convictions. A few things, however, can be pieced together from various sources.

Thus, in his virulently propagandistic book, **Le Portugal Baillonné**, published in Paris in 1972 when faint hopes of actually gaining political power made few demands for democratic moderation, Soares recalled his student days on p. 77: "In choosing sides between the U.S. and the USSR in case of war, given my Marxist formation, I would have sided with the latter."

A promising start, indeed, for the future savior of Portuguese democracy!

Were these views only the result of youthful idealism, overcome by mature experience? Not at all. Soares expressed his current views on the essence of Communism and cooperation with it in an August 25 interview for the Paris **L'Express**. Speaking at the height of the Goncalves crisis, he said that for the situation to stabilize two things were necessary: (1) an agreement of "all the democratic forces" and (2) "resolution of the crisis caused by the Communist Party."

And he went on: "It would be a national tragedy if Communists did not play the democratic game. The present difficulties... will, perhaps, move the Communist Party to reflection and to the realization that it is opening the door to the reaction, the counter-revolution. This will perhaps convince the Communist Party to renounce undemocratic methods. If it does that, an agreement will still be possible We could still embrace a common political platform."

Thus, (1) Soares clearly counts Communists among the "democratic forces" with whom he is seeking "agreement"; (2) though by their undemocratic methods the Communists have caused the crisis, Soares sees no reason why they couldn't change and begin to play what he calls the democratic game; (3) in spite of Communist violence and openly expressed contempt for democracy, Soares offers them not merely agreement, but a common platform!; (4) Soares' first worry and fundamental criticism of the Communists is not that they are threatening freedom and democracy, but that their reckless conduct is endangering that which both they and the Socialists have in common—and which is the very opposite of freedom.

The essence of Soares' dialectical objections to the Communists is not that they are Communists, but that their tactical mistakes were making the uprising of the anti-Communist majority of the Portuguese people easier.

In other words, by arrogating to himself the exclusive right to speak for the Portuguese "opposition," Soares is only following the old Communist principle that Communism may be criticized only by Communists or their useful dupes. This kind of criticism Communism does not dread at all because it always comes at the right moment to rejuvenate and save it. Whoever wins, Tito or Stalin, Brezhnev or Mao, Dubcek or Husak, Soares or Cunhal, one things is certain—Communism cannot lose.

The confusion which reigns about Portugal—which Mr. Geltman has made a heroic effort to dispel—is as much invaluable to the liberals, in order to preserve their policies from discreditation, as it is to the Communists who have no illusions that they could ever seize power without deceit and force. One of the most infamous and dishonorable roles in this operation is being played by Mario Soares.

Stephen Karganovi
Bloomington, Indian

RUSSELL KIRK
(continued from page 29)

principles of order has done much to preserve America from the confusion and violent change that plagues most modern nations." Whereas radical authors and even some conservative writers might see the critical events of the sixties and seventies as a prelude to the breakup of American society, Kirk harbors no such notions. He fancies no apocalyptic visions. Unlike the late Richard Weaver, he does not perceive modern civilization to be on a "fearful descent," nor is the impending "dissolution of the West" just around the corner. Although the American order has been shaken as of late, there is still much cause, Kirk concludes, to believe that it will remain essentially intact for the foreseeable future. □

BRUDNOY'S FILM INDEX
(continued from page 36)

Marxist, kindly but bureaucratic-minded cops, an old horse, falling leaves, falling snow, falling interest level...

■ **Lisztomania:** After this, Ken Russell has nowhere—and I mean *nowhere*—to go but up. Liszt was the first teenie-bopper idol, don't you see, and Wagner was a Nazi, or didn't you know? And time and space make three. Roger Daltry of The Who, who shone in Russell's *Tommy*, looks wholly embarrassed in this wholly embarrassing mishmash. Even the teenie-boppers have shown the good sense to stay away.

■ **Mahogany:** At last, a soap opera for blacks, encompassing every iota of treacle imaginable. Tracy, played by Diana Ross, who can sing but doesn't here, transmogrifies into Mahogany, the fashion model star of the hour, under the inspired tutelage of Anthony Perkins, who has perfected the high fag twitch. Billy Dee Williams is the Negro stud our Mahogany really loves, but Perkins represents glamor and opportunity. Naturally, he must die, Mahogany must Return To Find Her Roots With Her Own People, and Billy Dee (who is a cross between Omar Sharif and Ron Dellums) wins his gal, thus proving that Afro-Americans have more fun, and white homosexual photographers commit suicide, and clothes make the woman, and the movie is breaking all box office records in New York and other centers of advanced culture.

■ **Rooster Cogburn (...and the Lady):** True Grit, Part II; John Wayne back as the cantankerous Western lawman, joined by Kate Hepburn as a missionary lady out to avenge her daddy's death at the hand of the desperados. The clash of macho vs. Gospel, with a story of no redeeming social value but with nice if predictably stereotyped performances from the leads. Justice, in case you were wondering, triumphs. There are moments of much worth, and great stretches of wilderness. □

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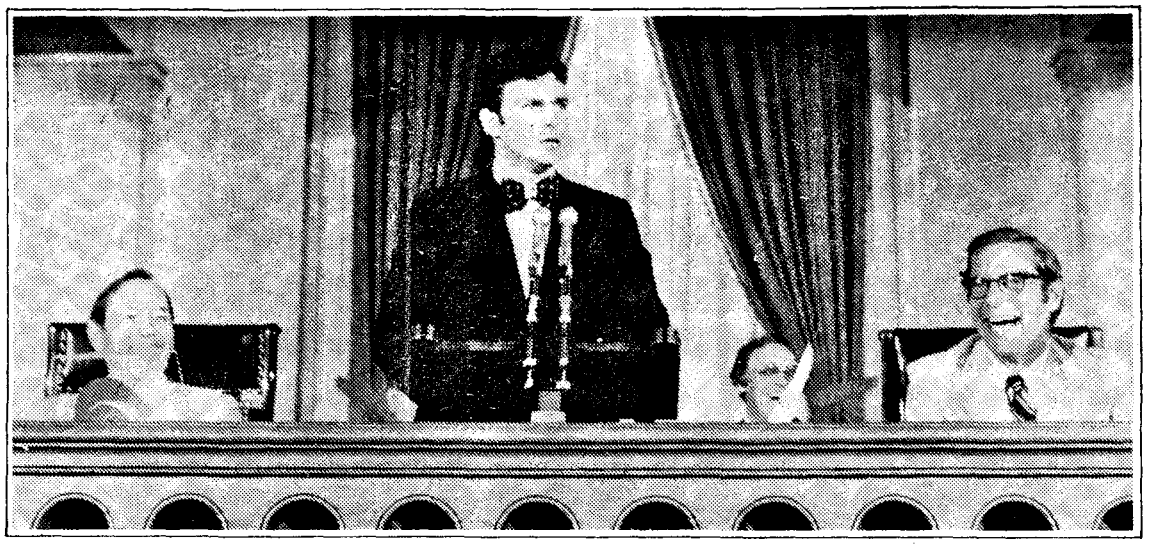

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., editor of *The Alternative*, delivering remarks after receiving an award from the American Institute for Public Service, in the Old Supreme Court Chamber on July 23. (Left to right, Sen. Robert A. Taft, Tyrrell, Cong. John H. Buchanan, Hon. William E. Simon.)

The Editor of "The Alternative" Speaks... The Secretary of the Treasury Laughs...

For that matter so do the senior Senator from Ohio, Senator Robert A. Taft, Jr., and Alabama's Republican Congressman, Congressman John H. Buchanan. No matter how burdensome one's cross might be, Tyrrell makes people laugh. So does *The Alternative*. It also makes people think.

There is no other magazine in America that is so successful in combining merriment and thoughtfulness. No other magazine offers its readers serious analysis, factual information, and a stained glass window on the world of the absurd. This is a civilized answer to urbane yokelry. It is never sold next to the *New York Review of Books*. In fact it is rarely sold on newsstands. To be sure to get this increasingly acclaimed review use this subscription form. And while you have the opportunity, why not subscribe for a friend? Doesn't someone you know deserve a merry respite from the heavy burdens of the world? Act now...and Happy Days!

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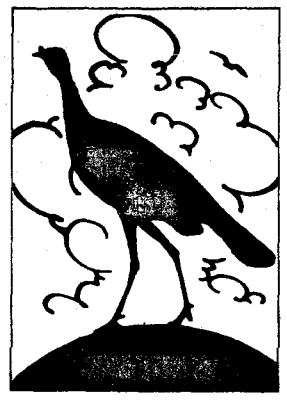

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